

OUR CITY, DELHI

Narayani Gupta



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Illustrated by Mira Deshpabhu

Introduction

This book is intended to do two things. It seeks to make the child living in Delhi aware of the pleasures of living in a modern city, while at the same time understanding that it is a historic one. It also hopes to make him realize that a citizen has many responsibilities in helping to keep a city beautiful, and these are particularly important in a large crowded city.

Most of the chapters include suggestions for activities and it is important that the child should do these as well as read the text. The book is divided into sixteen chapters, so that two chapters can be covered each month, and the course finished easily in a year. It is essential that the whole book should be read, because the chapters are interconnected. They aim to make the child familiar with map-reading, to learn some history without making it mechanical, make him aware of the need to keep the environment clean, and help him to know and love birds, flowers and trees.

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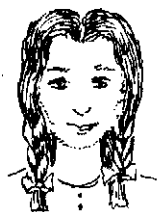
Delhi in 1835

Delhi in 1955

Before We Say Goodbye

1. Where Do You Live?

This is a book about eight children and the town they live in. They **are** lively children, and ask a lot of questions. Here they are:



Jaya



Chetan



Sumit



Pamela



Ramu



Chitra



Salim



Archana

It was the first day of term, and they were chatting to Miss Verma, their teacher.

‘Where do you live?’ she asked them.

‘Chiragh Delhi,’ said Jaya.

‘Karolbagh,’ that was Chetan.

‘Paharganj,’ said Archana.

‘Alipur Road,’ put in Pamela.

‘Ballimaran,’ said Salim.

‘We have only just come to Delhi. We live in Sarojini Nagar,’ said Chitra.

‘I live in Shahdara,’ said Sumit

Ramu was impatiently waiting for his turn. ‘Nizamuddin,’ he called out.

‘That’s a lot of different places,’ smiled Miss Verma. ‘I’ve written them down. Now, Archana, is Paharganj in north Delhi, or west or east—or south?’

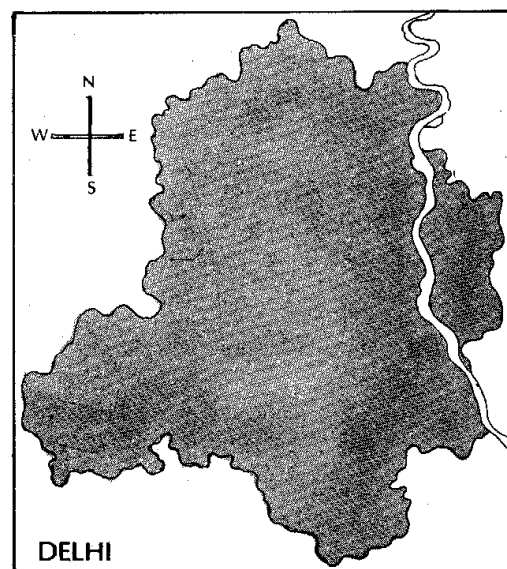
Archana was a little uncertain. ‘North?’ she asked. ‘South,’ said Ramu.

‘I think we shall have to do it slowly,’ said Miss Verma.

‘Let us start with a blank map of Delhi. Now which part of the map is the north?’ The top,’ answered Jaya.

‘Quite right,’ said Miss Verma. ‘Remember one rule about all maps. The top is north, so that the bottom is the south, and the left side west, and right side east.

That is the way the earth’s directions are put on a map — the northern part of the earth is at the top, and the south at the bottom. Now let’s fill in all the places I have written down, on the map.’ ‘Karolbagh is in west Delhi,’ said Archana, reading what the teacher had written.



‘Why have you also written “Rashtrapati Bhavan”, Miss Verma?’ asked Pamela. That’s where the President lives.’ ‘And he’s not in our class,’ laughed Ramu.

‘I have written Red Fort and Rashtrapati Bhavan just to show you where they are in Delhi. Which of you lives nearest to the Red Fort?’ ‘I do,’ said Salim. ‘No, my house is nearer,’ said Pamela. ‘We will learn about distances another day,’ said Miss Verma.

Today let us try to learn a little about the places we live in. By the way, I live in Chittaranjan Park,’ she added, filling it in on the map.

‘Chiragh Delhi,’ said Jaya thoughtfully. ‘Chiragh means *diya* or lamp.’

The full name is Roshan Chiragh Delhi—the light of the lamp of Delhi,’ said Miss Verma. This was the name given by the people of Delhi to a saint who lived here 600 years ago. There was a little town here, around which a strong high wall was built more than 200 years ago. If you go to Chiragh Delhi, you will see parts of the wall even now.’

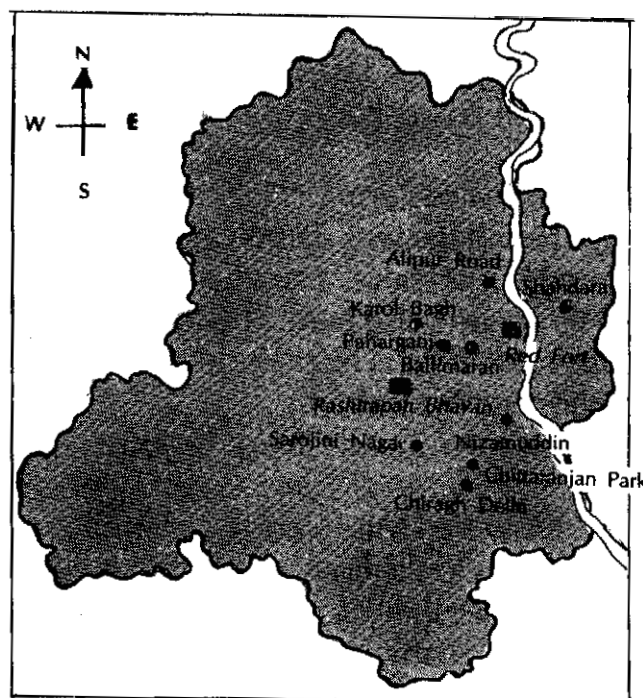
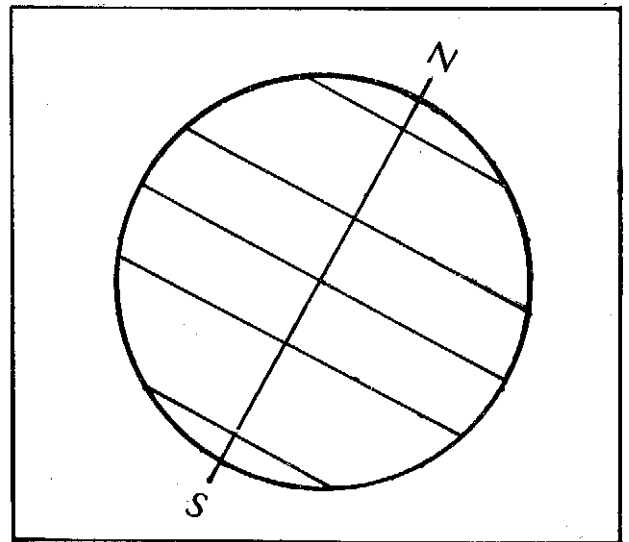
There is a wall quite near where I live,’ said Salim.

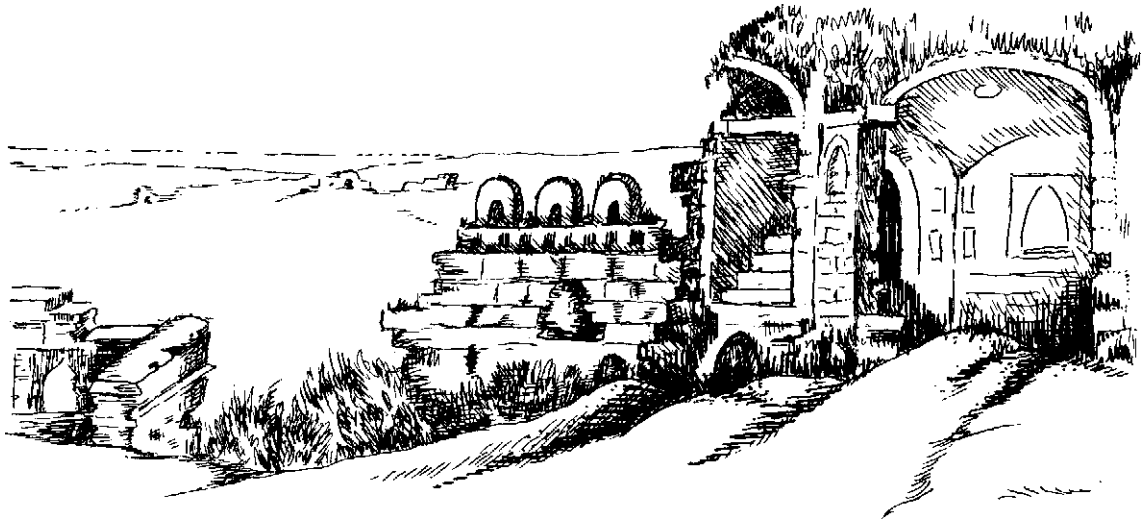
That’s the wall of a town which is about 300 years old,’ said Miss Verma. ‘Its name was Shahjahanabad, after the Mughal Emperor Shahjahan. It was much bigger than Chiragh Delhi. Where you live—Ballimaran—is one of the roads inside this town. The name comes from *Balli* (a bat, used for a bat-and-ball game).’

‘Does “Karolbagh” mean a garden? Which garden?’ asked Chetan.

There was a large garden there once,’ said the teacher. In the last 100 years, people have built houses there. It is now so crowded that it is difficult to imagine it was a grove of fruit trees once.’

‘Now let’s look at Paharganj, which is between Karolbagh and Ballimaran. *Pahar* means hill, and *ganj* means a market, so this was the name of a market on the ridge, which is a low hill Just outside the walls of Shahjahan’s town.’





‘Does Shahdara mean anything?’ asked Sumit.

‘*Shah* means Emperor. Possibly *dara* means doorway,’ answered their teacher, ‘Shahdara is east of the river Yamuna. This was also a small village. Most of the battles for the control of Delhi city were fought near it. In the last 30 years it has also become very crowded, like Karolbagh and Paharganj.’

Ramu was not going to be last this time. ‘Nizamuddin was also named after a saint, like Roshan Chiragh Delhi,’ he said, proud of knowing this.

‘Quite right,’ said Miss Verma. ‘Hazrat Nizamuddin lived here 600 years ago. The village was named after him and many famous people have been buried here. You must have heard of the poet Amir Khusro. His grave is also here. This area is called Nizamuddin West. Across the main road is Nizamuddin East, where you can see the Emperor Humayun’s tomb.’

‘“*Nagar*” means town,’ said Chitra. ‘So does “*pur*”,’ said Pamela.

‘Right again,’ answered Miss Verma. ‘Alipur Road was given this name because it leads to the town of Alipur. If you look at the road on the map, you will see that it follows the line of the river Yamuna. It is an old road, from Shahjahanabad to Amritsar.’

‘Was Sarojini Nagar an old town?’ asked Chitra.

‘No, these *nagars* (like Tilak Nagar and Malaviya Nagar) are very new—only about 25 years old. The houses in these *nagars* were built by families or by the government as homes for the large number of officials who live in Delhi because it is the capital city. Where I live, Chittaranjan Park, the land was given to people who had left East Pakistan (which is now Bangladesh) in 1947 and had lost their homes there. Many houses in Karolbagh and Shahdara were also built after 1947 by these people.’

‘What a lot of towns there seem to be inside one city,’ exclaimed Chitra as they went out. ‘I never knew this before.’

Meanings

lively: full of energy

impatient: in a hurry

uncertain: not sure

thoughtful: thinking

grove: a group of trees

official: someone in an important position; usually in government

exclaim: to say something in surprise

census: an official count of people

This chapter shows that:

Delhi is a very large city. There have been small towns in the Delhi area for hundreds of years. We can recognize some of these towns by the names of places in Delhi. Today these older towns are part of the big city of Delhi.

Exercises

1. Pair the following correctly.

Pahar	pur
Shah	bagh
Ali	ganj
Karol	uddin
Nizam	dara

2. Fill in the blanks (east/west/north/south).

- a. Shahdara is in Delhi.
- b. Sarojini Nagar is in Delhi.
- c. Alipur Road is in Delhi.
- d. Karolbagh is in Delhi.
- e. Chittaranjan Park is in Delhi.

3. Write five sentences about the locality you live in.

4. The government counts all the people in the country once every ten years. This is called a census. Why don't you learn how to make a census? Go to five houses near your home and make a table like the one below:

Address

How many men and boys in each house

How many women Total and girls

1.

2.

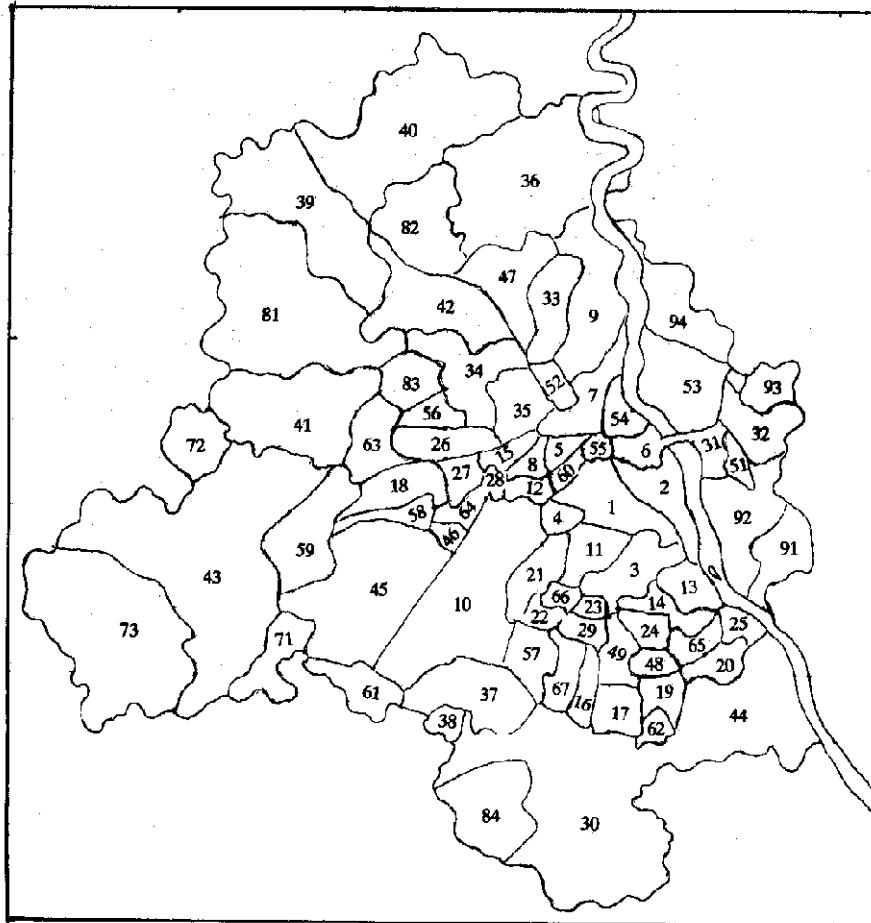
3.

4.

5. *TOTAL*

For the teacher/parent

Below is a map of Delhi which shows the pin code number for each area: (e.g. the number for Sarojini Nagar is 16, and the Alipur Road number is 54. The number for Delhi itself is 110000; so Sarojini Nagar will be Delhi 110016 and Alipur Road, Delhi 110054. Ask children to tick the area where his or her school, and home, is located on the map. Can they tell where Connaught Place would be?



2. The Ten Cities of Delhi

During lunch-break the children were sitting on the steps outside their classroom eating their lunch. 'I am Indraprastha,' announced Sumit. The other children stared at him, 'What are you talking about?' said one of the children.

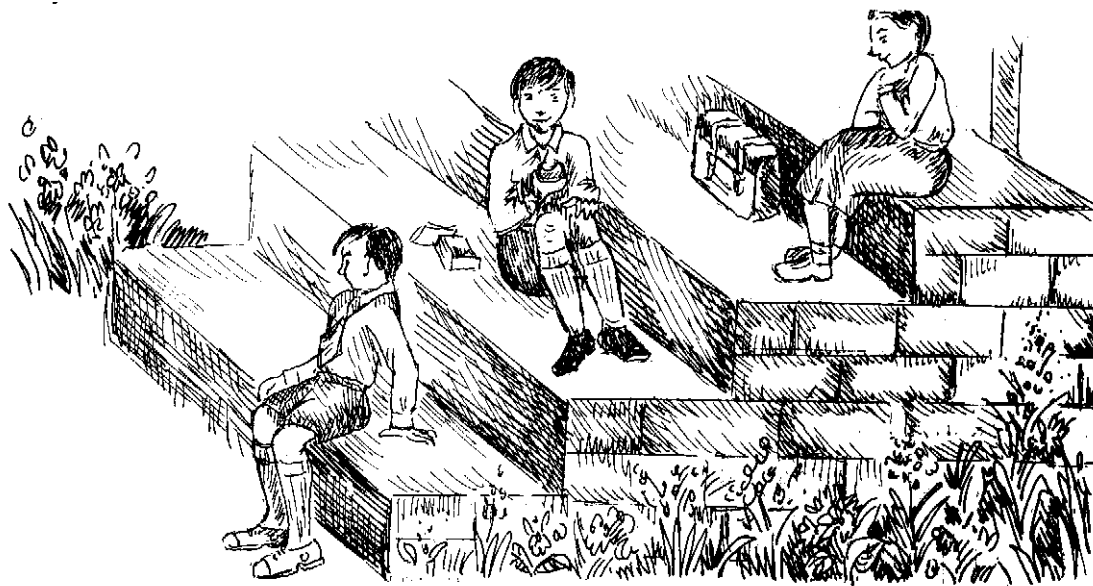
Sumit laughed. 'We went to Purana Qila last Sunday,' he explained. There we saw excavations—you know, when they dig up lots of earth and find bits of old towns and remains of people and things from long ago underneath.'

'I was told that, and I dug such a deep hole in our back garden,' said Ramu. 'And all I found was an earthworm and a bone that our dog had buried there,' he added sadly. The others all laughed.

'I'll take you to Purana Qila,' Sumit consoled him. 'By the way, you are Tughlakabad.'

'What *is* he talking about?' asked Chitra, who was still a little lost in Delhi.

'You see,' said Sumit, feeling very wise, 'there used to be lots of towns in Delhi. Indraprastha was the oldest, and I am Indraprastha because I am sitting on the lowest step. Tughlakabad was built later. Ramu is sitting on a higher step so he must be Tughlakabad.'



'And what am I?' asked Chitra.

'Oh, you are right at the top, so you are Delhi as it is *now*,' Sumit replied.

The bell rang, and they all got up, brushing the crumbs off their laps. Sumit wanted to go on with his lecture. There were seven cities in Delhi,' he said.

Miss Verma was entering the classroom. That was what they used to say. Now you can count ten cities. Maybe we can learn something about them today. Let us start with names. Do you know the meaning of Indraprastha? It means 'The Town of Indra'. *Prastha*, *-pur*, and *-abad* mean town, and are usually added to a person's name—like Indraprastha, Ali-pur, Jai-pur, Shahjahan-abad, Farid-abad. *Qila*, *kot* and *garh* mean "fort"—like Purana Qila, Lal kot, Ferozeshah Kot-la, Ali-garh, Ballabh-garh. These places had forts or walled towns once.'

'Last time, we marked the places where we live on a map of Delhi. We can use the same map to mark the old towns of Delhi.'

Chetan looked carefully at the map.

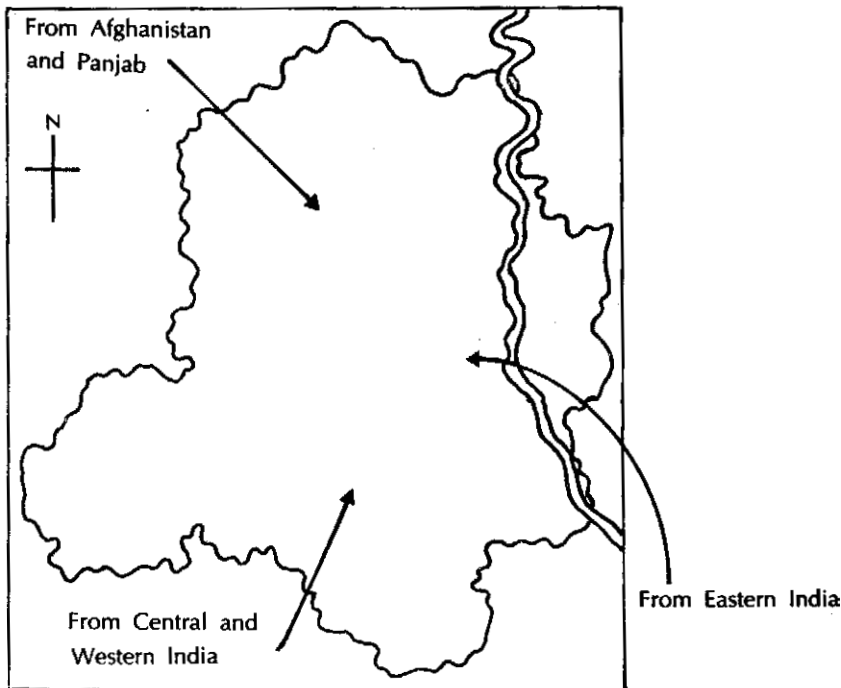
'All the Delhi except modern Delhi are west of the Yamuna,' he said.

There are many which are *far* from the river. They are near Chiragh Delhi,' added Jaya.

Miss Verma explained. They are west of the river because all the Delhis except the first and the last two were built by rulers who came to Delhi from Lahore and Kabul. So they wanted a strong capital on the west of the river, before they crossed it to extend their empire eastward.'

'Delhi is a convenient point at which to cross the Yamuna,' Jaya remarked.

'What Jaya said is quite right. If you look at the map, you will see that the towns 1, 2, 3, and 4 are near Mehrauli, and 5, 7, 8 and 9 near the Yamuna. There is a reason for this.



'In Hindi, there is a saying that three things are needed to build a town—*dariya*, *badal* and *badshah*. The river (*dariya*) gives water, without which the people will die. The clouds (*badal*) bring rain, which keeps the river and tanks full. The emperor (*badshah*) builds the town and protects the people from attack.

The towns near Mehrauli were but It as strong forts, to protect the people living in them. The kings took a lot of trouble to get water for them. They built tanks and canals. But even this was not enough, as the number of people in the town increased. This was why later rulers built their forts near the river.'

'Why were so many forts built?' asked Pamela.



'In some cases, the old towns had been invaded by an enemy, and so much was destroyed that later rulers had to build a completely new town. In some cases, like Shahjahanabad, an emperor wanted to build a new city because he was very fond of beautiful architecture. Remember, Emperor Shahjahan also built the Taj Mahal.'

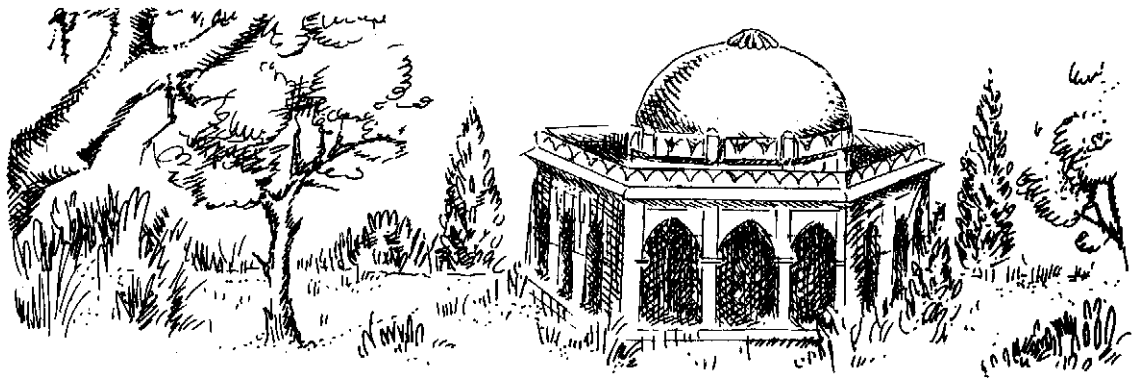
'How have these buildings lasted so many hundreds of years?' asked Ramu. 'Our houses don't look so strong.'

I think it is because in those days people built slowly and carefully, and with the hope that their buildings would last for ever. This is true all over the world—look at the Egyptian pyramids (which are 5000 years old) or the cathedrals of Europe which are over 1000 years old. They are as strong as rock.'

'Did they build them with rock?' asked Salim.

'With stones cut from rock. They joined them with mortar, not with cement. They fitted the stones together so carefully that they held firm, even without cement.'

It must have been very difficult to cut stone into all those carved pillars and arches.



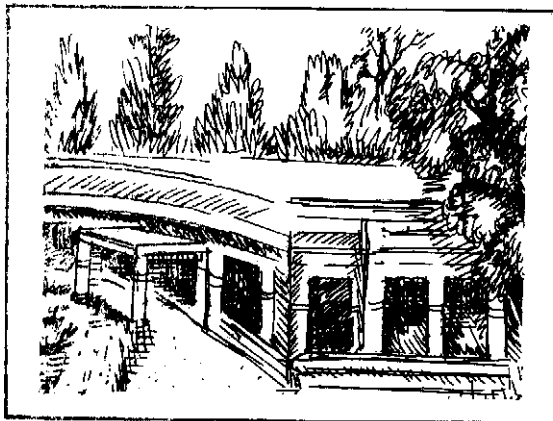
‘Yes, it took a lot of workers many years to make these buildings,’ said Miss Verma. ‘And that is why I feel sad when I see people scribbling their names on these old monuments. It is like scribbling on a lovely painting or in a book. I hope you don’t do it!’

‘What about the ninth and tenth Delhis?’ asked Archana.

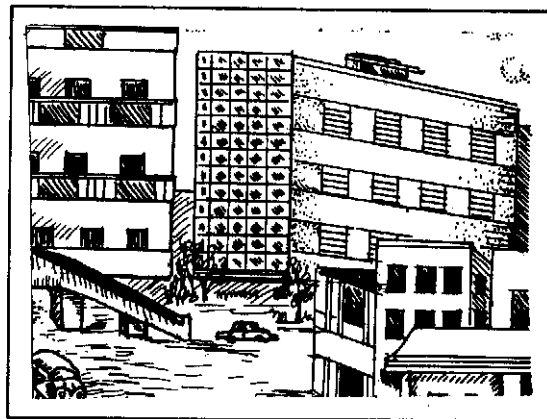
‘You will see that I have written 9 in two places—the one in the north is the area where the British lived when they first came to Delhi. The other is the city of New Delhi, planned and built by the British after 1911, when they decided to have a new capital in place of Calcutta.’



Different kinds of homes in Delhi



A colonial bungalow



A block of modern flats

‘The tenth city—our present city—actually covers all the older Delhis. After India became independent in 1947, a lot of houses were needed very quickly—for all the people who left Pakistan and came to Delhi, and for the people who came to work in all the new central government offices that were set up here.’

‘It is exciting to live in such an old city,’ said Sumit.

‘And we are lucky that Delhi’s climate is dry,’ said Miss Verma. ‘In places like Orissa and on the Madras coast, damp sea winds have spoiled the sculpture on old buildings. That does not happen in Delhi’s climate. One day we shall go to Mehrauli and see the archaeological excavations being done there.’

‘I hope there will be more than earthworms and bones!’ said Ramu.

Sumit laughed. I am sure you’ll see bits of clay pots and old houses,’ he assured him.

A Note from Archana

Do you know what B.C. and A.D. mean when written with a date? I used to think A.D. was me—Archana Datta! My mother explained it to me.

B.C. means Before Christ (i.e., before the birth of Jesus Christ).

A.D. means Anno Domini (which in the Latin language means In the Year of the Lord, i.e., Jesus Christ).

This is how it works:

Older	300 B.C.
	200 B.C.
	100 B.C.
	1 B.C.

The year Jesus Christ

was born	A.D. 1
	A.D.100
	A.D.200

More recent	A.D. 300
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So if I say Indraprastha was the name of the town in Delhi in 1100 B.C., it means Indraprastha was about 3000 years ago (1100 B.C.+ A.D. 1986 = 3086).

Before the British ruled India, in many parts a different kind of dating was used (called Saka). In some countries, dating is begun from the time of the Prophet Muhammad. So we can say 20 July 1986 or 1 Shawwal 1407 or 3 Jaistha 2043

Meanings

excavations : uncovering by digging

console: to comfort

calendar: list of months and years

emperor: ruler of a group of countries, an empire

mortar: mixture of lime, sand and water

cement: powder made by burning lime and clay, used in building

This chapter shows that:

The oldest towns in the Delhi area are covered with earth, and their buildings or remains can be seen only after careful digging. The buildings in these and other historic towns of Delhi were very strong. Because of this and because Delhi has a dry climate, we can still see the beautiful details of these old buildings. From these monuments, we see that the older Delhis spread from Mehrauli to the Yamuna.

Exercises

1. Choose the correct answer.
 - a. Tughlakabad is near the Yamuna/Mehrauli.
 - b. Delhi became the capital of British India in 1911 /1947.
 - c. The eighth Delhi was built by the Mughal Emperor Jahangir/Shahjahan.
 - d. The stones in old buildings are joined by cement/mortar,
 - e. The oldest town in Delhi was Kurukshetra/Indraprastha.

2. Join the correct ending to the names:

Shahjahan prastha

Tughlak panah

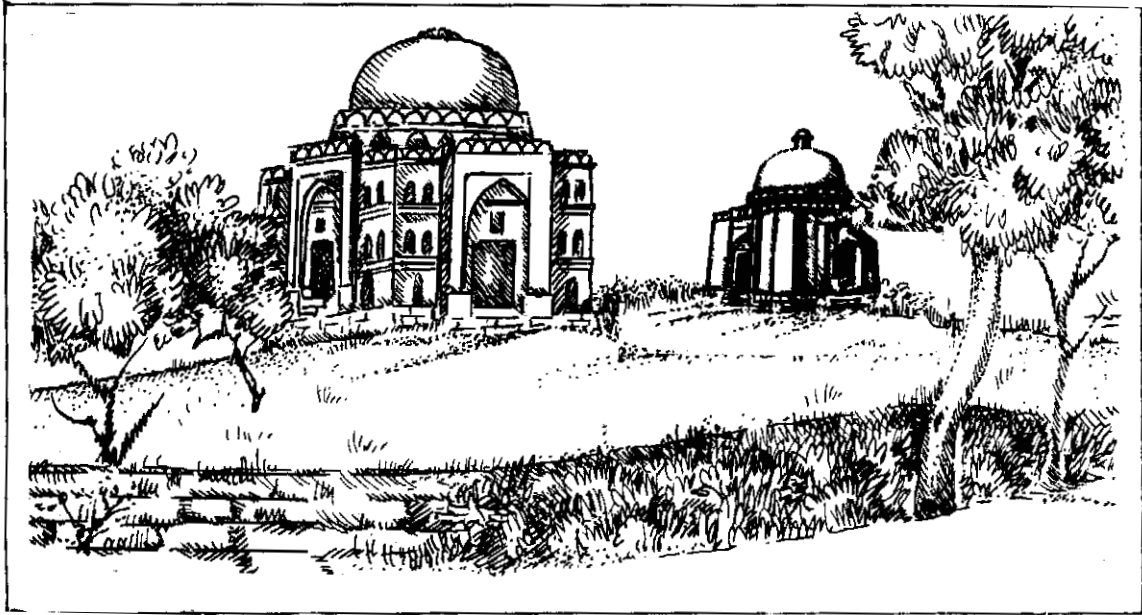
Ferozeshah abad

Jahan Kotla

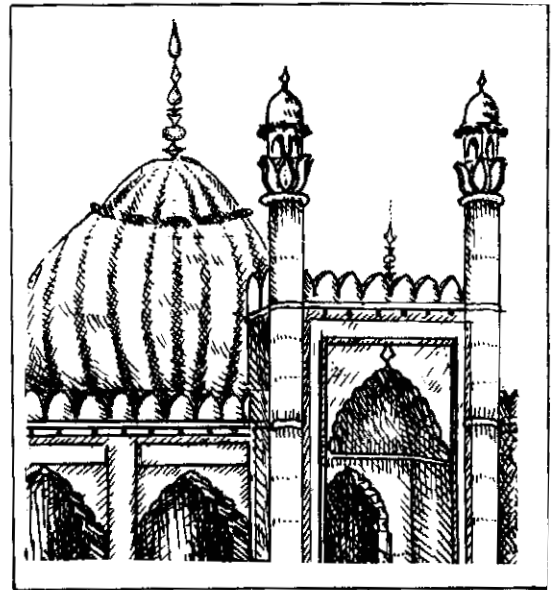
Indra abad

3. Draw a picture and write ten sentences to describe one of the monuments of Delhi.

Curious Names



The Dadi-Pothi (grandmother-granddaughter) tombs, near Green Park.



Chor Minar (the tower where thieves were punished) in Hauz Khas.

Ghata Masjid (cloud mosque, because of the black and white lines) in Daryaganj.

For the teacher/parent

Suggestions for a 10-city tour of Delhi, by bus or car.

1. *Lal Kot/Qila Rai Pithora* {the Tomars}: The broken walls of this can be seen on the road to the Qutb (Aurobindo Marg). Many of the stones and carvings of Prithviraj Chauhan's fort were used to build the arches near the Qutb Minar. The Minar, begun by Iltutmish, has 378 steps.

2. *Siri* (Alauddin Khilji): Much of this has been later built on, but parts of its wall can be seen near the Asiad Village and near the Madangir Road-Saket crossing.

3. *Tughlakabad* (Ghiyasuddin Tughlak): Notice the sloping walls {to make them stronger} and the beautiful tomb of Ghiyasuddin (which used to be surrounded by a lake).

4. *Jahanpanah* (Mohammed Tughlak): Vijay Mandal (between Panchshila Park and Malaviya Nagar) was where Mohammed Tughlak reviewed his troops.

5. *Ferozeshah Kotla* (Ferozeshah Tughlak): In this fort, notice the Ashoka Pillar that the Emperor had brought to Delhi and placed here. His own tomb is in the beautiful Hauz Khas complex (see Chapter 13).

6. *Sayyid and Lodi Delhi*: Most of these monuments are enclosed in the Lodi Gardens (Lady Willingdon Park) which was earlier the village of Khanpur. The Lodis also built Masjid Moth, which is near present-day Uday Park.

7. *Purana Qila* (Humayun and Sher Shah): The enormous gateway on the Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg, outside Ferozeshah Kotla, belongs to Humayun's city. Sher Shah's mosque in the Qila has beautiful marble and sandstone work. The library is of interest because of Humayun's accidental death there when he tripped and fell on the staircase.

8. *Shahjahanabad* (Shahjahan): If you approach Delhi Gate from Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg, you will see the city wall stretching to the right towards Ring Road.

9. *British Delhi*: a) The Ridge. Opposite the main gate of Delhi University is Flagstaff Tower, which the British army occupied in the 1857 siege. Further west is the British Victory Tower.

b) New Delhi. Walk or drive down from India Gate (built in memory of the soldiers killed in World War I) to Rashtrapati Bhavan. Look at the Secretariat buildings and notice how they combine Indian and Western styles of architecture.

10. *Modern Delhi*: The capital of independent India, a) Diplomatic Enclave, Chanakyapuri. An area set aside for foreign embassies.

b) Buddha Jayanti Park. A beautiful open park, sited on the Ridge.

c) Ashoka Hotel. The earliest of the big hotels necessary for a major capital city.

d) Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium. One of the largest stadiums in Asia, built for the Asian Games of 1982.

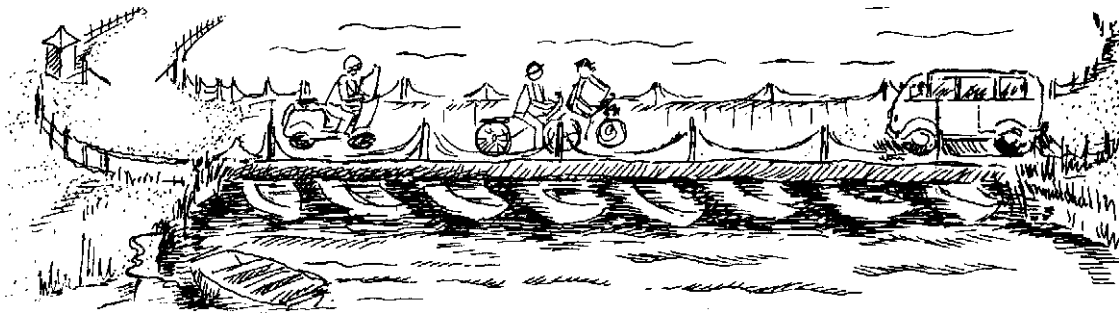
e) Birla Mandir.

3. All Roads Lead to Delhi

‘We came to Delhi by the Rajdhani Express from Calcutta,’ said Chitra. The train came to New Delhi station.’ (‘Near Paharganj,’ Archana put in). ‘From the bridge over the Yamuna my father showed me Humayun’s Tomb, and the minarets of the Jama Masjid. We could also see some skyscrapers.’

‘Are there other bridges across the Yamuna?’ asked Chitra. Miss Verma had just entered the room. ‘Yes,’ she said. There is another railway bridge near the Red Fort. It was but It 100 years ago and is the first bridge built in Delhi for trains. There is also a road bridge for cars and pedestrians, near the Red Fort. The oldest bridge was made up of boats placed side by side. Recently more bridges have been built across the Yamuna to connect new areas in East Delhi with the rest of Delhi.’

‘So if you were coming to Delhi from Calcutta before the railway line was built you had to cross the river by the bridge of boats?’ asked Chetan.



There was another delightful way to travel—by river. The Yamuna flows down to Allahabad, so if you were not in a hurry, you could travel by boat. The Yamuna used to flow along what is now Mahatma Gandhi Marg or Ring Road. The travellers would come past Humayun’s Tomb, as Chitra did, but instead of crossing the river they would go along it further north, and get off at Qudsia Gardens.’

‘Oh, that’s where the Inter-State Bus Terminus is,’ said Salim. ‘When we went to Shimla, we took a bus from there.’

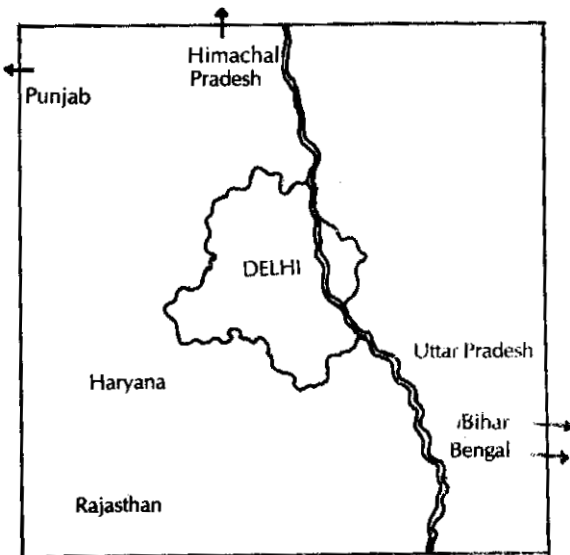
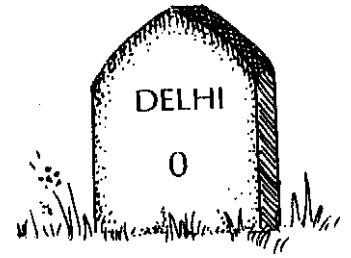
‘Yes, if you come to Delhi from anywhere by bus, you get off there,’ said Miss Verma. ‘When you come by bus, its fun to lookout for the milestones—or kilometre-stones—that tell you the distance to Delhi. The numbers get smaller and smaller till you get to 1.’



‘Does it ever say ‘0’?’ asked Ramu.

‘Yes,’ said Sumit. I once saw a milestone near Rajghat saying “Delhi—0”. But what does it mean, Miss Verma?’

‘It means that point is used as the centre of the town, from where they start measuring distances. After all, Delhi is so big that you can have milestones inside the town. In Chiragh Delhi you could have a board saying “Alipur Road 22 kilometres” or “Shahdara 28 kilometres”,’



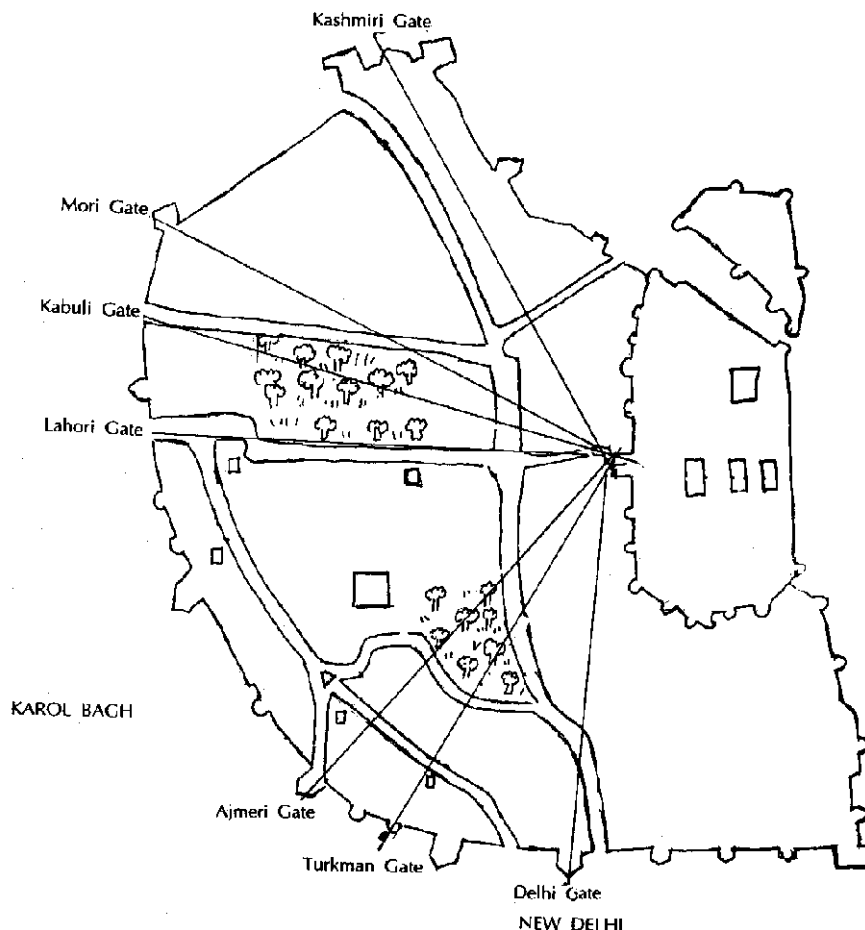
‘My aunt lives in Jaipur. I did not cross the Yamuna Bridge when we went to spend a holiday with her,’ said Ramu.

That’s because Rajasthan is west of Delhi,’ said Archana, who by now knew the difference between the four directions.

‘Shall we get back to the map?’ suggested Miss Verma. The children looked carefully at the map.

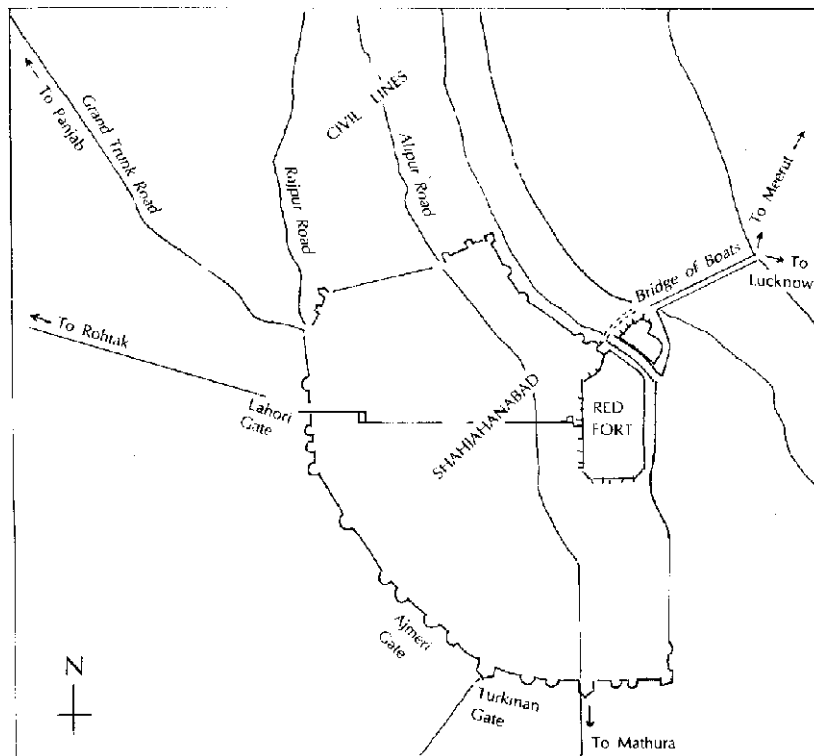
‘I’ll give you something interesting to do,’ said Miss Verma. ‘Can you find the sketch we made of Shahjahanabad?’

Sumit was quick. His notebook was soon open at the sketch. Take a pencil,’ continued Miss Verma, and draw a line from the front gate of the Red Fort to some of the city-gates. Then continue the lines outward,’ Sumit enjoyed drawing. Soon he had drawn lines through Kashmir Gate, Lahore Gate, Kabul Gate, Ajmeri Gate and Delhi Gate. Here is his drawing.



‘Now let us compare it with the actual roads,’ said Miss Verma, taking out a road map of Delhi. Here are the main roads shown on the map. Do you see that they are quite similar to Sumit’s lines?’

‘Why is it called Ajmeri Gate and not Jaipur Gate?’ asked Ramu, with his mind still on his earlier question.



‘Because Jaipur was built by Raja JaiSingh almost 100 years after Shahjahanabad was built,’ Miss Verma answered.

‘Why is there no Amritsar Gate?’ asked Chetan, who had been to Amritsar the previous year. ‘Was Amritsar also built after Shah-jahanabad? And don’t we say Darwaza as well as gate?’

‘No,’ said Miss Verma. ‘Amritsar was built before Shahjahan’s reign, but Lahore was a bigger and more important city then. Lahore (which is in Pakistan), and Kabul (which is in Afghanistan) were included because these places were part of Shahjahan’s Empire.’

‘Why is there a Delhi Gate *in* Delhi?’ Archana wanted to know.

That’s because when the people of Shahjahan’s town referred to Delhi, they meant not only their own town, but also the older cities of Delhi. These lay south of Delhi Gate.’

‘What is the Grand Trunk Road?’

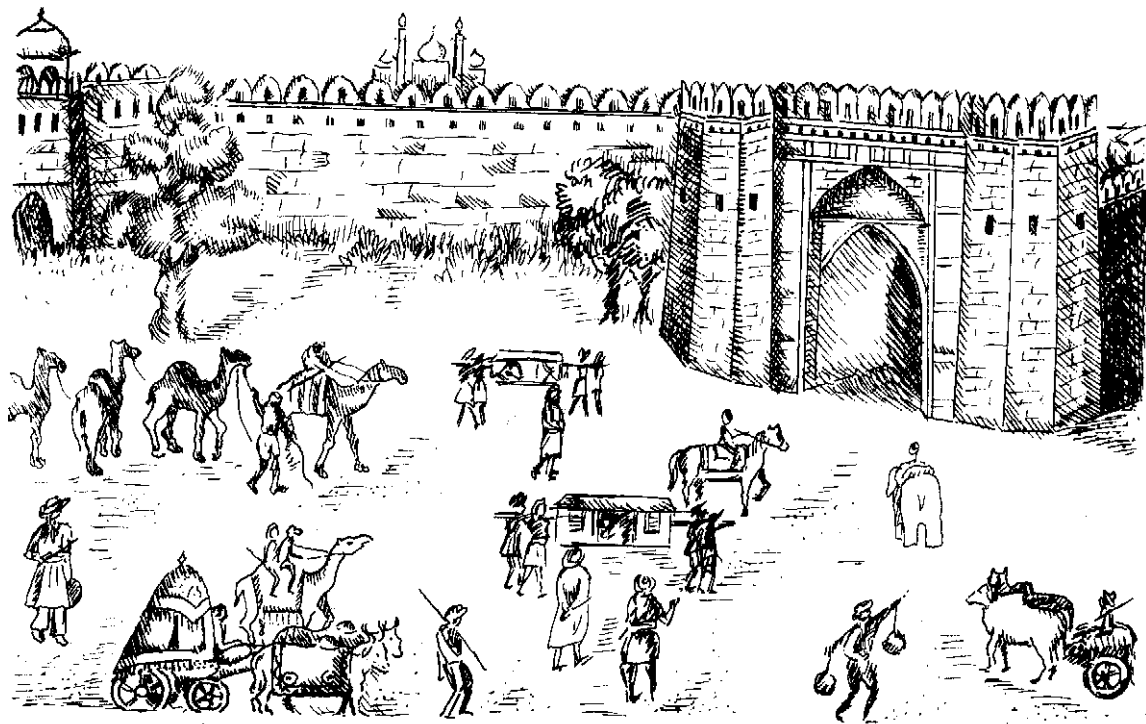
‘A “Trunk road” is a main road—what we would today call a National Highway.’

‘Like the trunk of a tree or the trunk of an elephant?’ asked Ramu, trying to be funny.

The other children knew the answer. The trunk of a tree, of course. The small roads that are connected to it are called *branch-roads*.

Miss Verma was able to tell them more. The Grand Trunk Road was largely built by the Emperor Sher Shah in the 1540s. It started from Lahore, crossed Delhi and went on to Patna. If you look at that map and join the Amritsar road to the Patna road, you will get the Grand Trunk Road.’

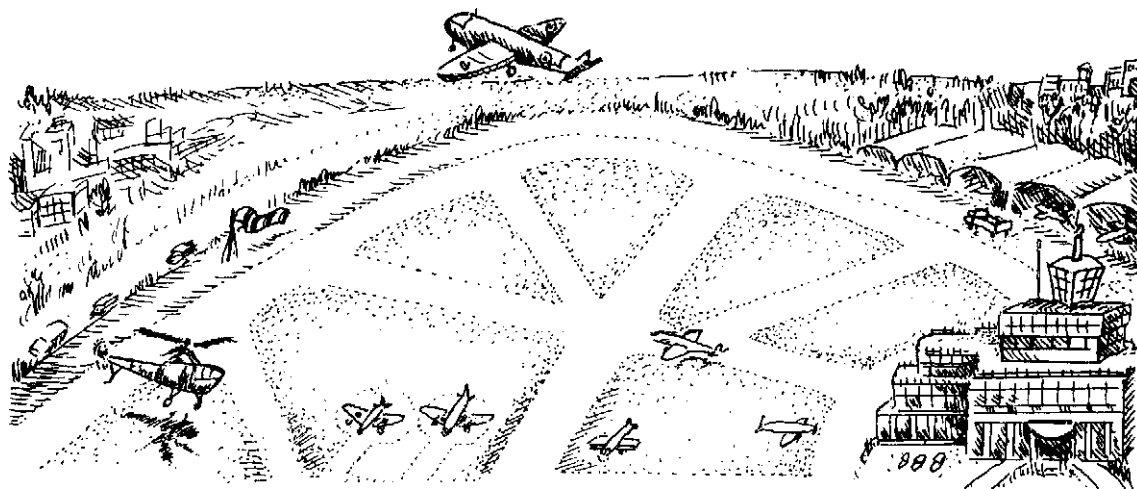
‘If you were living in Delhi 300 or 400 years ago, you would have seen the travellers coming along the Grand Trunk Road. They came by camel, bullock-carts, on horseback, or in *palkis*. In *palkis* they travelled very slowly—about 14 kilometres a day. They would spend the night in resthouses, or *serais*.



‘There is a place called Sheikh Serai near us,’ said Jaya. ‘Was that a travellers’ serai?’

‘Yes. There is also Yusuf Serai, Arab Serai, Badli Ki Serai... There must have been many more, but they have either had their names changed or, because the *serai* buildings have fallen down, people have forgotten about them.’

‘That must have been a slow way to travel!’ said Salim. ‘Agra is about 200 kilometres from Delhi. By *palki* it must have taken nearly three *weeks* to get to Agra! When we went by bus it took only about four hours!’



‘It is even less by plane,’ said Chitra. ‘When my father went to Calcutta, the aeroplane reached in two hours!’

‘Did the plane take off from Safdarjang?’ asked Sumit.

Chitra knew the answer to this because she lived near Safdarjang airport. ‘Palam and Indira Gandhi are mostly used now’, she said. ‘Safdarjang is an old airport and it’s now too small for most modern planes, it is only used by gliders and by the Flying Club, which teaches flying. It is great fun to stand on the flyover and see the gliders taking off. When you come to our home, we can all go there and watch them.’

‘And when you come to see us,’ said Ramu, ‘we can go for a ride on the Circular Train.’

‘What is that?’ asked Sumit.

‘It is a train that goes round Delhi. If you get in at Nizamuddin, it stops at all the little stations—Lajpat Nagar, Sarojini Nagar, the Cantonment, Kishanganj, Sadar Bazar, Old Delhi, New Delhi and then back to Nizamuddin. The entire journey takes about an hour.’

‘I never knew there were so many stations in Delhi,’ said Salim, surprised.

‘It will be fun to go for a ride on the circular train,’ said Miss Verma. It will take you near the homes of Chetan, Archana, Ramu and Chitra, and you will see a great deal of Delhi.’

So it was decided that the next Saturday they would all go for a ride on the circular train.’ And Nizamuddin is the prettiest station in Delhi,’ said Ramu proudly. (‘Almost as if he owned it,’ whispered Chitra to Jaya, laughing).

Meanings

minaret: spire of a mosque

skyscrapers: very high buildings

pedestrians: people walking on a road or pavement

recently: not long ago

delightful: enjoyable

measuring: finding out exact size

similar: alike

previous: the one before

flight: travel by air

glider: aeroplane without an engine

fly-over: a bridge that carries a road over other roads or railway tracks

This chapter shows that:

There were formerly only two bridges across the Yamuna. One more was built recently; but soon we shall have a fourth bridge connecting East Delhi with the rest of the city.

The main roads in Delhi still follow the old routes of the city of Shahjahanabad. We can see city gates on these roads. The names of these gates tell us where the roads lead, e.g. Lahore Gate, Ajmeri Gate, and Kashmiri Gate. The most important road was the Grand Trunk Road. It started from Lahore, passed through Delhi and went to Patna.

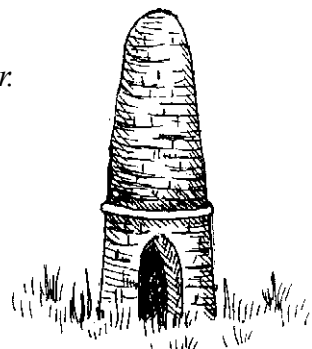
Travellers used to come to Delhi by *palki*, in horse-carriages or on horseback. They also came by boat. Over the last 100 years there has been a great change in the way people travel. Trains were made, and then cars and buses. Even later, aeroplanes came into use. All this means that now we can travel to and from Delhi much more quickly.

Exercises

1. Who lives nearest to New Delhi station—Jaya/Chetan/Pamela/Archana?
2. Which of these towns had gates named after them in Shahjahanabad? Kabul, Surat, Jaipur, Ajmer, Bangalore, Lahore.
3. In ten sentences, describe the most interesting journey you have made out of Delhi.

Did you know?

In earlier days distances were measured in *kos*. This ————— is a *kos-minar*. You can see these on the Delhi-Agra road. 1 *kos* = about 2 km



4. Delhi's River—The Yamuna

‘Please may I go and have some water?’ asked Pamela,

When she returned, Miss Verma asked the class, ‘Where does the water Pamela drank come from?’

‘From the cooler!’ they answered. ‘And where does the water in the cooler come from?’

‘From the pipes?’ said Chetan. But before Miss Verma could say ‘And where ...’, Jaya cried ‘From the Yamuna.’

‘Good,’ said the teacher, ‘Where else does the water in Delhi come from?’

‘From wells?’ asked Pamela. ‘I once drank water from a well. It tasted lovely.’

‘From under the earth, yes. But nowadays, instead of digging wide wells, we put tube-wells into the earth. These pump water to the surface. This is called sub-soil water. Delhi has a lot of sub-soil water, because the river Yamuna used to flow further to the west earlier, and a lot of water remained below the surface.’

‘Tube-well water tastes different,’ said Chitra.

‘Yes, it has the taste of the salts in the earth. Since the river water is flowing it does not collect these salts.’

‘My father also told me about the river shifting,’ said Salim. ‘We were going in a Mudrika bus, and when we went along the Ring Road behind the Red Fort, he said that was the old river bed! And the bridge across the Ring Road between the Red Fort and Salimgarh used to be a *river* bridge?’



A well



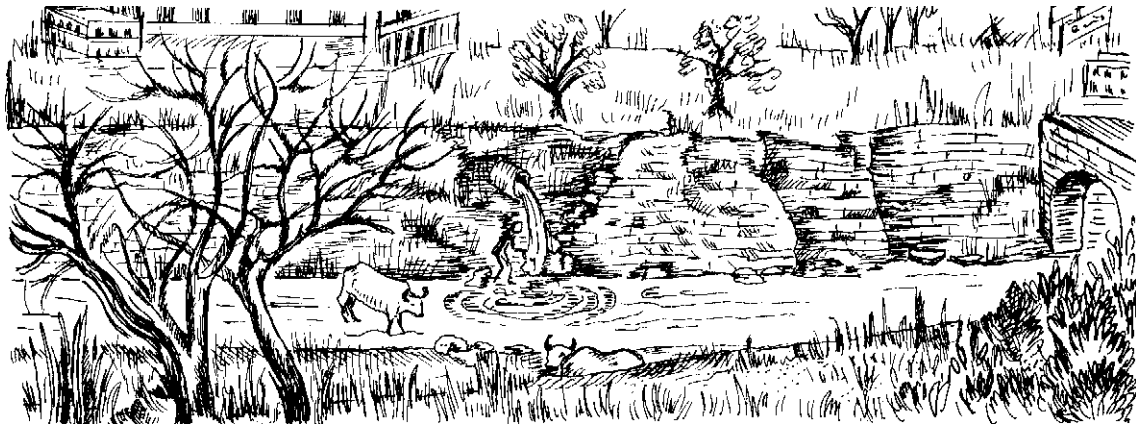
A tubewell

‘In Shahjahan’s time,’ the teacher told them, ‘people liked to build their houses on the river bank. It kept their houses cool, and it was lovely to look at.’

‘Some people—the nobles and the rich merchants—had water brought to their houses in jars and leather bags. Most of the people went down to the river to bathe. A hundred years ago, if you went to the river early in the morning, you would have seen hundreds of people bathing.’

‘Weren’t there canals and tanks too?’ asked Sumit. ‘Yes. In fact, archaeologists have found that in many of the oldest towns in the world, water was brought to towns by canals from the river. Emperor Alauddin Khilji’s engineers built the Great Yamuna Canal from a point further north where the river flowed faster than it did on the plains. Their canals, like their buildings, were very strong and big. They were lined with stones. You can see the lines of the canal—near Mall Road, near Nizamuddin and near Chiragh Delhi, as well as in other places. These are now dry, except when there has been a lot of rain, but for centuries they provided water to the fields of Delhi, and to its gardens and roads.’



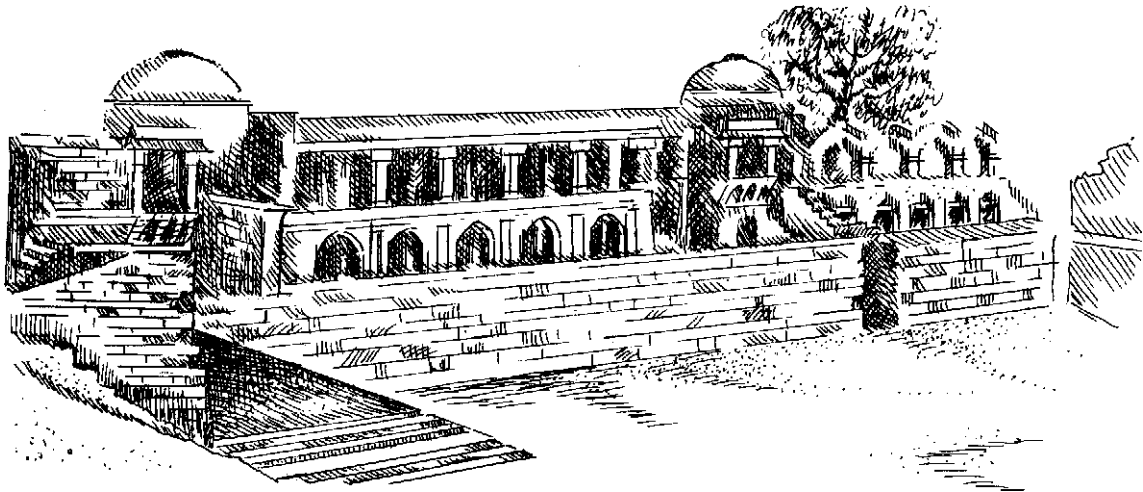


‘I heard that Hauz Khas was a tank. Is that true?’ asked Chitra.

‘Yes, its name means Royal Tank. It was also built by the Khilji Sultan. If you go into the Hauz Khas monuments and look down, you will see what a big and deep tank it was.’

‘There was a canal in Chandni Chowk, my father told me,’ said Salim. ‘He says it used to flow into the Red Fort.’

Miss Verma nodded. ‘If you go to the Fort, you will see the little sandstone channels along the paths and inside the buildings through which the water flowed.’



‘I wish there was a canal through our rooms at home,’ sighed Chetan. The others laughed at the idea.

‘Well, it would be nice to have a cool canal along the middle of some of those long wide roads. They get so hot in summer,’ said Chitra.

‘When did people start getting water through pipes?’ asked Pamela.

‘About a hundred years ago,’ answered Miss Verma. ‘The river water flows into the pumping station at Chandrawal, where it is filtered to get rid of all the germs, and then passes into the pipes through which it comes to our homes.’

‘I read in the newspaper that the water is not always clean,’ said Salim. ‘People throw lots of rubbish into the Yamuna.’

‘Yes, unfortunately,’ replied Miss Verma. ‘Some years ago there were more than 200 types of fish in the Yamuna. Now there are just over 100. The rest have died out because the water has poisons which harm them. This is caused by pollution—when waste materials from homes and factories are thrown into the river.’

Imagine the Yamuna doing so much for us—pumping in water day and night.’

‘Yes,’ smiled Miss Verma. ‘All towns need a lot of water, and *clean* water. The least we can do to thank the Yamuna is to stop making its water dirty, and to be very careful not to waste water. If you see a tap left open, turn it off, will you?’

Meanings

sub-soil: lower layer of soil, below the top soil at the surface

filter: to remove dirt by passing through a strainer

pollution : making something (e.g. air or water) dirty

This chapter tells us that:

All living things need water. Towns need a lot of water, because so many people live there. People in warm climates needed a lot of water. This is why towns are often built near rivers. In earlier days, people in Delhi got water from wells, and from the river by canals and tanks. Nowadays we get water from under the earth through tube-wells and from the river through pipes. It is important to keep river water clean.

Exercises

1. Many towns are built near rivers. Can you pair the following correctly?

Town	River
London	Yamuna
Cairo	Ganga
Calcutta	Thames
Patna	Nile
Agra	Hooghly

2. Make sentences with the following words: pollute, filter, canal, tank, well
3. Write 10 sentences to describe a day in the life of the Yamuna, now or long ago.

Did you know?

The Yamuna begins its life from a glacier in the Himalaya, at Yamnotri and it joins the Ganga at Allahabad.

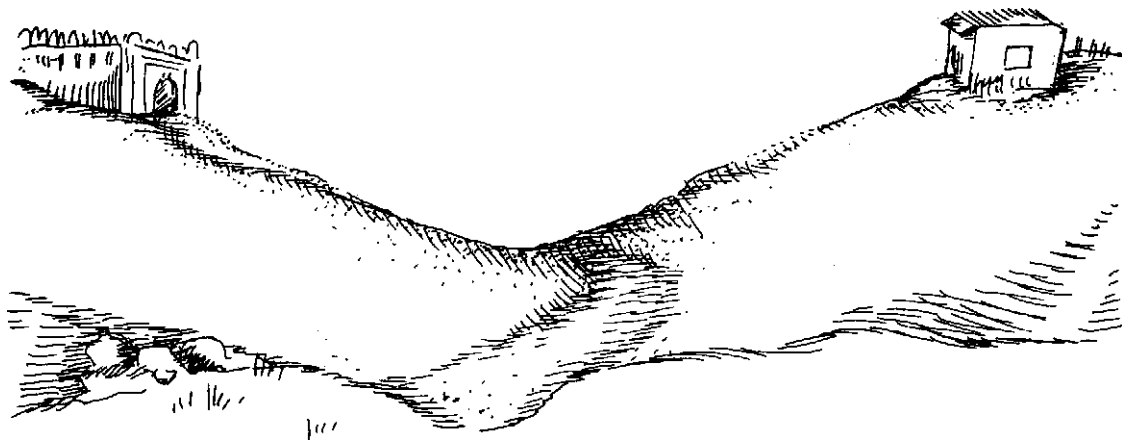
For the teacher/parent

You can explain water pollution to a child by a simple experiment. Half-fill a jar with tap water. Cover the jar and leave it on a shelf. Next day, you will see the dirt that has settled at the bottom of the water.

5. The Oldest Hills—the Ridge



There is a corner of the school playground which Ramu likes very much—it is a little group of rocks, dark-red and smooth, on which he climbs and pretends he is on top of a mountain. When he went to his friend Ajay's school, he noticed that there were no rocks in the playground. Miss Verma explained, 'That is because his school is not on a hill, as ours is. Rocks are usually found on hills.' Ramu was surprised—he thought hills were to be found only in places like Shimla or Mussoorie. From that day, he started to look for hills. There were hills in Delhi, gentle slopes around which were roads or parks. When he went to Pamela's house for her birthday party, he saw how Alipur Road sloped down after the Old Secretariat.



When Chetan was going home from Connaught Place, he had noticed a place from where he could see the slopes of a hill on both sides.

That is the Ridge,' his older brother Ravi told him. 'No,' said Ravi's friend Bhaskar, who was having lunch with them that Sunday. (Bhaskar is from Kerala, and lives in a hostel in Delhi University.) The Ridge is near the University. I go for walks there every morning.'

Then what are those rocky hills in the Jawaharlal Nehru University campus?' asked another friend of Ravi's.

'It's all the Ridge,' replied Ravi. 'Or, if you want it to sound grand, it is the Aravalli Hills.'

Chetan looked at his school atlas. The Aravalli Hills are in Rajasthan,' he cried.

'Yes,' replied Ravi. 'But the atlas does not show so much detail. The Ridge in Delhi is the point where the Aravalli Hills slope down and become almost flat. They are some of the oldest hills in India.'

'Which are the youngest?' asked Chetan, who is himself the youngest.

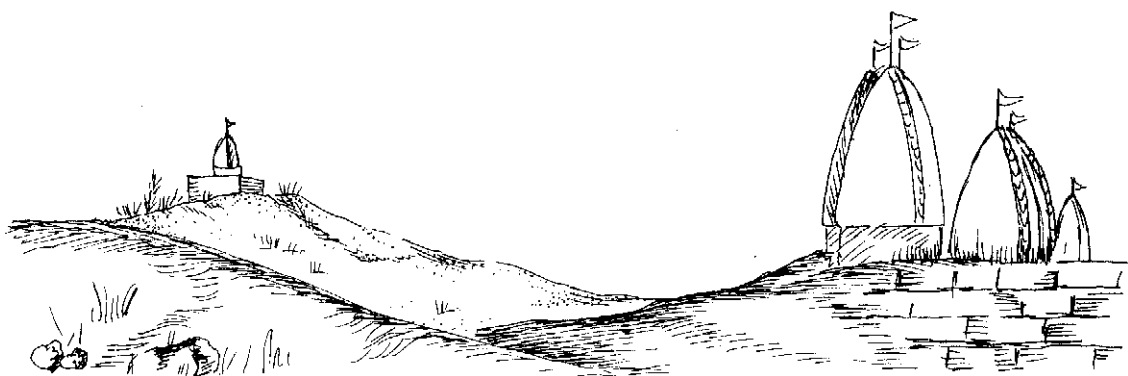
The Himalaya,' said Bhaskar.

Chetan's eyes opened wide. 'But that's *impossible!*' he exclaimed. They are the highest mountains in the world!'

'Yes, but the Aravalli hills were also high. They have got worn down. When I say old, do you know how old? It means 500 million years.' This was too much for Chetan. He had to write it down to understand. He had been amazed when he heard how old the town of Delhi was. Now even Indraprastha sounded recent compared to the age of Delhi's Ridge!

When Chetan looked up, his brother and his friends were still talking about the Ridge. 'Anand Parbat and Paharganj have been given their names because of the hills,' said Ravi.

'Kalka Mandir is on top of a hill', said Chetan.





The Jama Masjid is also on a hill,' said Chetan's mother, looking up from her newspaper. The hill is Bhojla Pahari. Temples and mosques are often built on hills, so that people can see them from a distance.'

There's a place near the University called Khyber Pass,' said Bhaskar. 'I thought the Khyber Pass was between Afghanistan and Pakistan!'

'Yes, it is,' smiled Mrs Das. The Khyber Pass in Delhi was given that name by the British soldiers who lived there. They gave it this name because it is a pass between the main Ridge and the hill called Majnun Ka Tila.'

'My office is on a hill,' said Mr Das, who had just entered.

The Secretariat—a hill?' asked Chetan. 'Yes,' said his father. The North and South Blocks are built on the slope of Raisina Hill. The President's House is built a little higher. The next time you watch the Beating the Retreat ceremony after Republic Day, see how the soldiers march up the hill and disappear over the crest.'

The Ridge protected Delhi from attack. It still protects it—from the Rajasthan desert. If there was no Ridge, the desert might have moved slowly into Delhi. Delhi has now grown so big that it has expanded beyond the Ridge. But it is very important that the spine of the Ridge should be kept as it is, with very little building on it. This will control the climate. If the Ridge is flattened out or built upon too much, it will make Delhi hotter and dustier.

The Ridge itself was once very hot—its rocks were barren and they used to radiate heat. The British army decided to make the Ridge cooler, by planting trees on it. They planted mostly *keekar*, a tree which needs very little water. Today there are many more trees that grow quite well there. Look out for these when you go to the Buddha Jayanti Park and the University Ridge.

Most people, when they think about a town, remember its buildings. But remember also the gifts of nature—the river, the hills, and the trees.

Meanings

amazed: surprised

ceremony: special programme

spine: backbone

climate: sort of weather a place has

barren : where plants cannot grow

radiate: to give out heat

This chapter shows that:

Delhi has not only a river, but also a low range of hills. These form the end of the Aravalli Hills, and in Delhi are called the Ridge. Delhi is covered with buildings, so that it is sometimes difficult to make out the hills. It is very important not to level the Ridge, because then Delhi will lose its natural protection against the heat and dust of the Rajasthan desert.

Exercises

1. Write five sentences explaining why the Ridge is useful to us.

2. Write true/false against the following:

a. Rashtrapati Bhavan is built on Anand Parbat. b. The Yamuna flows through 'Khyber Pass'. c. Jama Masjid is built on Bhojla Pahari. d. There are no trees on the Ridge.

A Note from Chetan

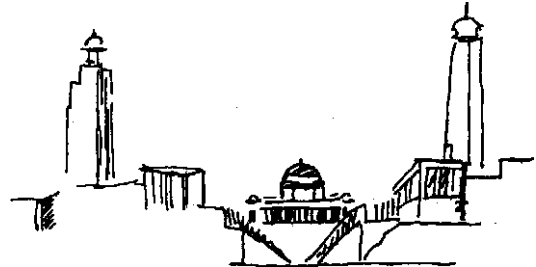
Go for a walk along Rajpath.

Half a mile from Rashtrapati Bhavan, it will look like this

Go nearer, to Vijay Chowk.

Now Rashtrapati Bhavan will disappear!

That is a trick played by Raisina Hill!



For the parent/teacher:

The Ridge is a beautiful place for a walk. You can go up Flagstaff Road, opposite the Old Secretariat on Alipur Road (Sham Nath Marg). Enter the Chauburji Masjid. There are lots of buses starting from all over Delhi which go to the Old Secretariat,

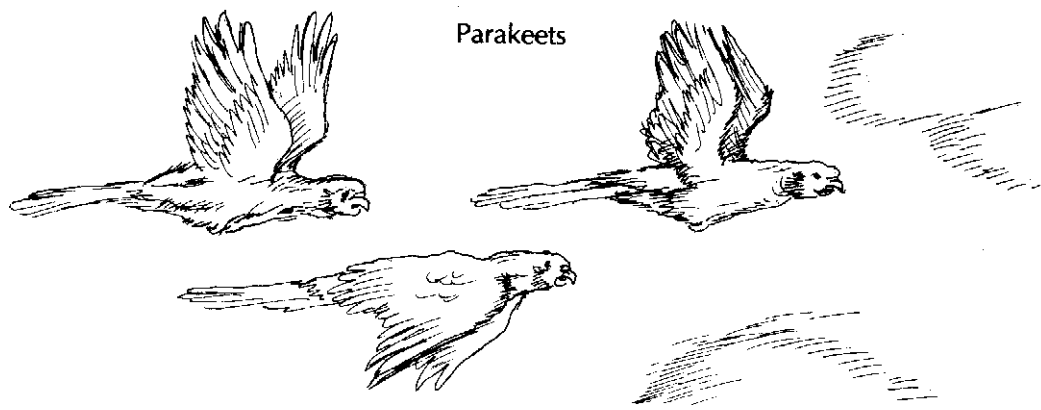
6. Delhi's Green Spaces

Chitra was walking home, eating a hot *bhutta*. It had rained all morning and the roads were wet, and the trees green and fresh. She noticed that someone had put up a rope-swing on a strong neem tree and a lot of children were swinging on it. Chitra felt very happy. Before coming to Delhi, she had been in Goa, and the dry summer in Delhi had been new and strange to her. The only good thing about the Delhi summer, she thought, is the monsoon that follows it! Swinging high on a cloudy day, flying kites in the strong breeze, eating a hot *bhutta*, these were all very special things.

That evening she added another 'special thing'—a peacock dancing with all its feathers fanned out, dancing with great happiness because the monsoon had come. This was in the Deer Park near Hauz Khas, where Chitra and her parents had gone for a walk.

As the sun set, the birds in the trees started chattering excitedly. 'Just like you,' Chitra's mother said, smilingly. Chitra always got very talkative at bed-time. Two parakeets streaked past, calling shrilly. 'Why aren't there any parakeets in our verandah?' asked Chitra, who liked sparrows and mynas, but thought parakeets were particularly pretty.





‘Birds like trees,’ her mother said, ‘And in Delhi there are many parks and trees.’

‘All towns need parks,’ her father said. There are so many people who live in flats or small houses without their own gardens. They need public parks. That is why, when a town is built, space is kept for gardens.’

‘Did the kings of old Delhi also make gardens?’ asked Chitra.

‘Yes, just as they took care to see that there were tanks and water-channels, they also planted trees and gardens. Along Chandni Chowk there was a big park. You have heard of Qudsia Gardens. There were also the Roshanara Gardens. Qudsia and Roshanara were ladies of the Mughal royal family, who laid out these gardens.’



There is a little verse which says:

‘I have planted a tree,
So I know what faith is.’

Faith is knowing that the tree you plant will grow tall and become beautiful. It was because of this faith that the rulers of old always took care to plant trees. These trees lived on long after the kings who planted them had died.

The British Viceroy Hardinge admired the gardens that Emperor Jahangir had made in Kashmir (the Shalimar Gardens). So a very big and beautiful garden was built behind the President’s House in Delhi. This is called the Mughal Gardens. In February, when these gardens are full of flowers, they are open to everyone.

Lutyens, the architect who laid out the Mughal Gardens, was a very careful planner. When the roads of New Delhi were made, he chose the trees that were to be planted on the pavements. He chose them by their size and shape. The New Delhi trees changed the climate of the city. Earlier there were many dust-storms, but the new trees, when they grew to full size, absorbed the dust. Trees are also very useful in other ways. They keep the air fresh. So, in a town where cars and buses let out smoke into the air, trees are very necessary to keep us healthy. They also help to reduce noise in a town. Sounds become less loud if there are trees around.

The need to have trees has been understood by the Municipality in Delhi. They have made green spaces the lungs through which the city breathes—the Buddha Jayanti Park, the Deer Park, the City Forest at Chiragh Delhi, Lodi Gardens, the Nehru Park, the parks near India Gate. Trees and shrubs are planted along the roads. There are some trees on older roads which are over a hundred years old. Others look quite big, but are only fifty years old. There are many which are only as old as you are (but are much taller than you!)

Another interesting thing about Delhi's trees is that some of them belong to Delhi—which means that they have always grown there. There are some others which were brought here from other countries. The casuarina belongs to Japan. From Australia came the eucalyptus—a tall, slender tree, from which an oil is made. Rub some of the leaf in your palm to get its smell!

Can you tell who is older?

(1) Chitra or the casuarina?



(2) The pipal or grandfather?



Have you noticed the flowering trees of Delhi? They seem to have an agreement by which they flower in turn, so that there is always some colour somewhere. Garden flowers also bloom all the year, but there are many which need a cold winter. These seasonal flowers look their loveliest in February, when the cold winter is made warm by their glowing colours.

Trees and flowers are as alive as us. Treat them gently. Get to know them, see how they shed their leaves at certain times of the year, when they bear flowers, find out which ones attract birds. If you have a garden, plant a tree and watch it grow. If you have a verandah, ask your mother for some flower pots and plant some flowers — if you plant the seeds in October, they will flower in January. It's nice to have plants of your own.

Meanings

strange : something not known or seen before

streaked : moved very fast

shrilly: like a high and sharp cry

particularly: specially

absorbed: took in

admired: found very good or beautiful

municipality : office which looks after a city

This chapter shows that:

A river and hills help a town a great deal. Trees and green spaces also keep a town healthy. Delhi has more trees than many other big cities. It is very important to keep them and to plant more, because without trees a town becomes a hot and dusty desert.

Exercises

1. Find out which of the following are natural to Delhi, and which have been brought from elsewhere.

casuarina	silver oak
eucalyptus	neem
keekar	bougainvillea
jacaranda	pipal
gulmohar	laburnum

2. Write true/false against the following:

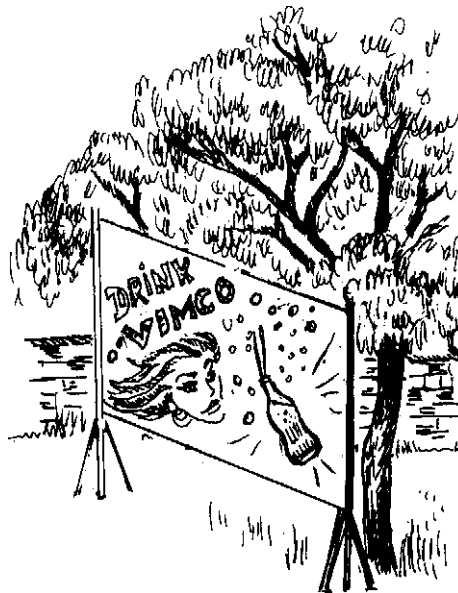
- Trees give out carbon dioxide during the day.
 - Trees make a place cooler,
 - Trees give out dust.
 - Trees lower noise.
 - Trees are bad for our health.
3. Write a description (5 sentences each) of two kinds of trees that grow in Delhi.

A poet wrote:

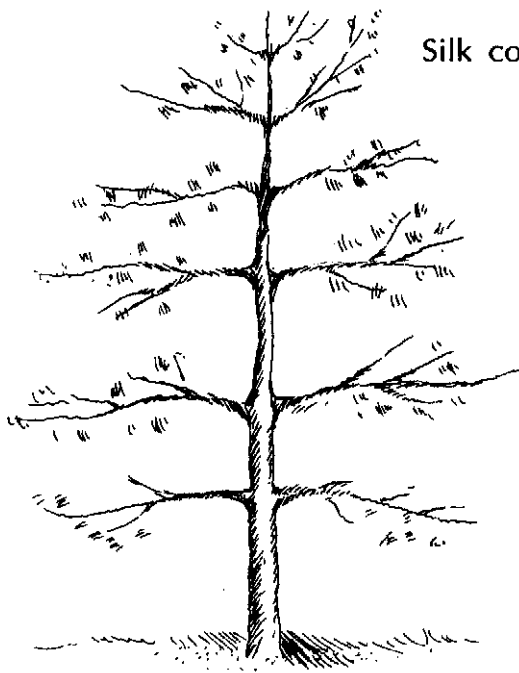
I think that I shall never see
A poem lovely as a tree.

Later another poet wrote:

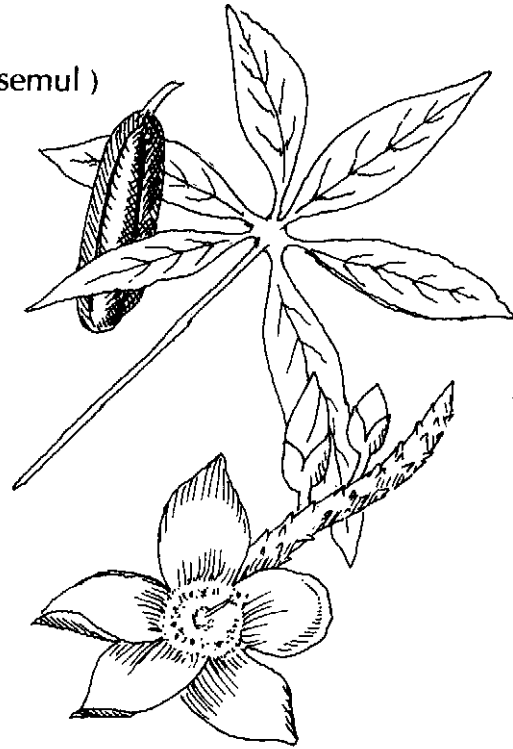
I think that I shall never see
A billboard lovely as a tree.
Do you agree?



Here are some common flowering trees How many do you recognize? Do any grow near your home or on the road on your way to school?

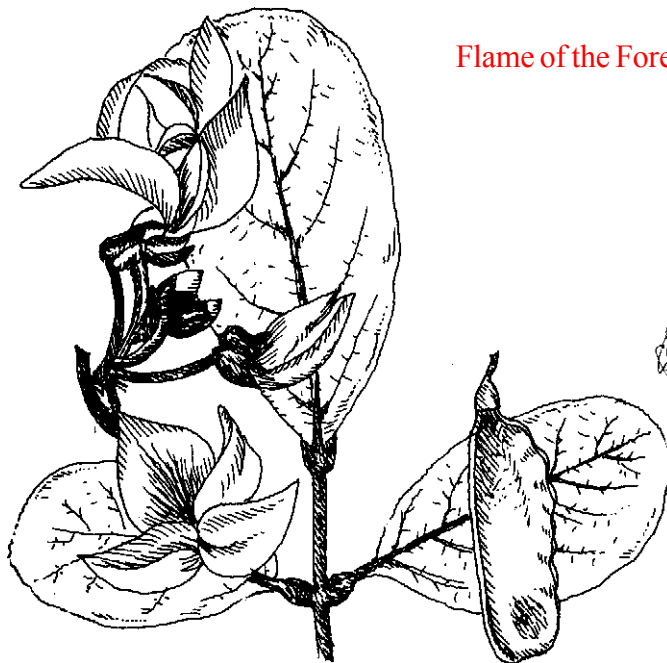


Silk cotton (semul)



Silk cotton (semul)

Flowers in January and February. Cotton from the pods is used for stuffing pillows and quilts



Flame of the Forest (Palash / Tesu)

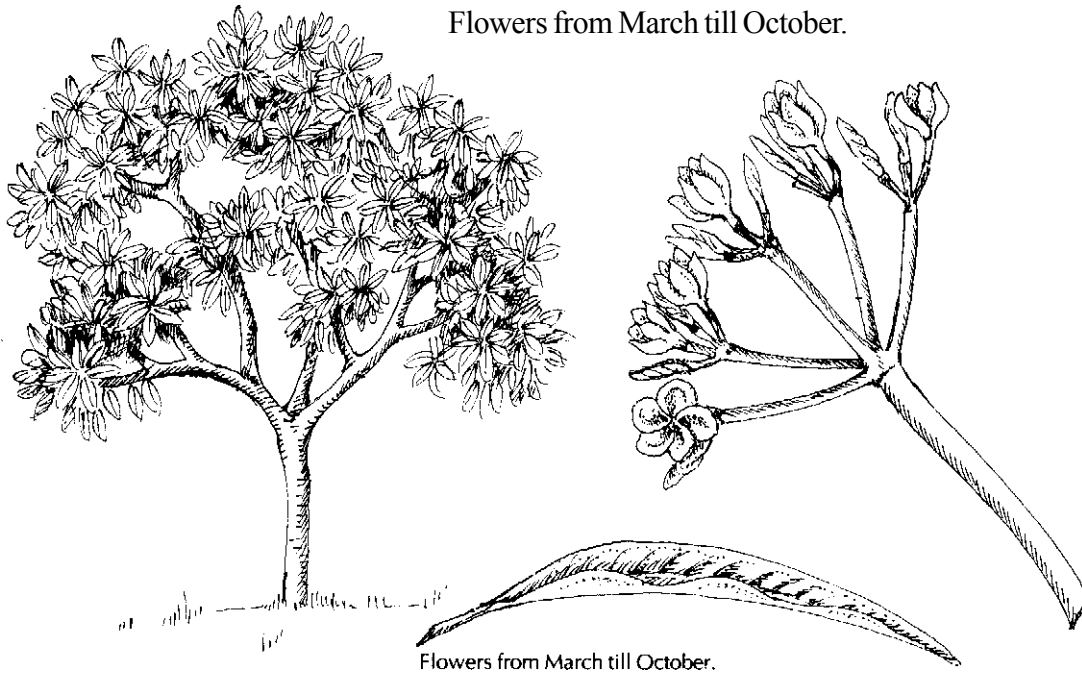


Flowers in February and March

A red dye made from its flowers is used to make Holi colours.

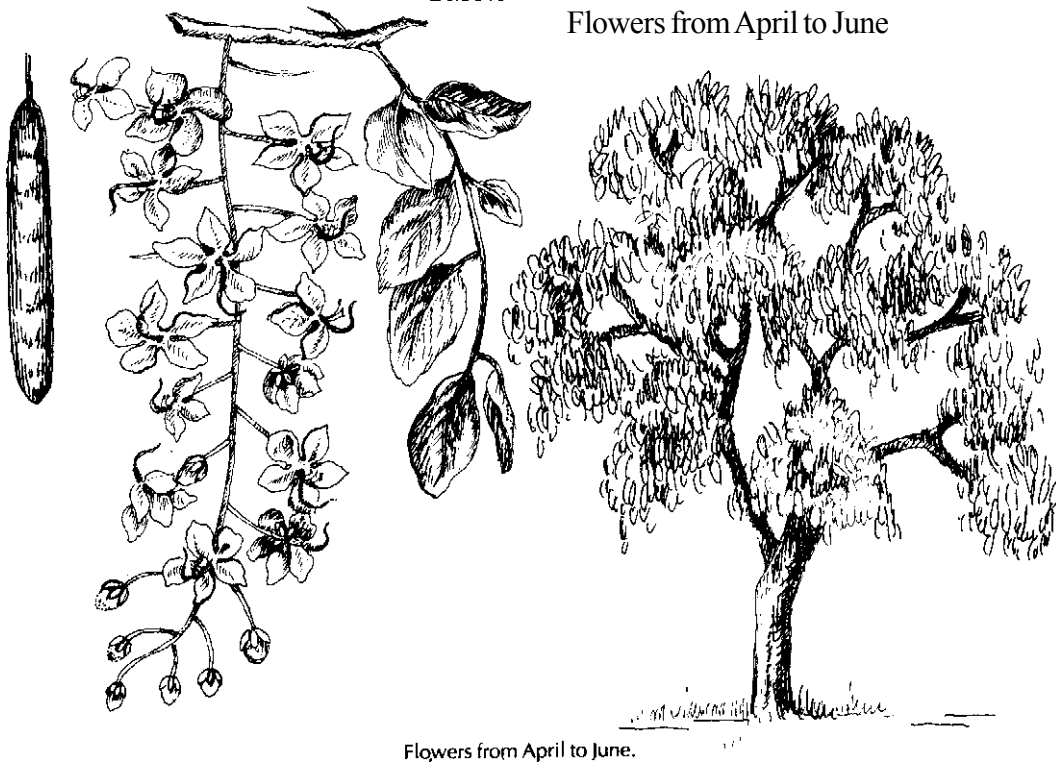
Frangipani (champa)

Flowers from March till October.



Cassia fistula.(amaltas)

Flowers from April to June



Jacaranda

Flowers from March to April (sometimes September and October too).

Jacaranda



Flowers from March to April (sometimes September and October too).

Gulmohar



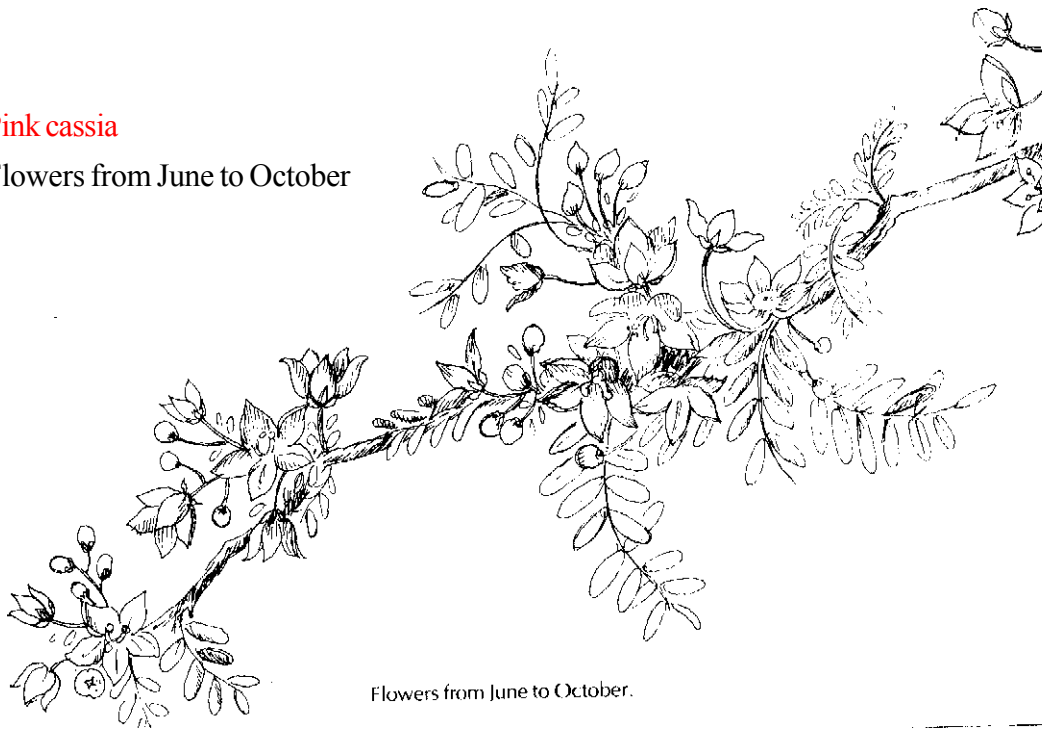
Flowers from April to July (sometimes September and October too).

Gulmohar

Flowers from April to July (sometimes September and October too)

Pink cassia

Flowers from June to October



Flowers from June to October.

Pride of India

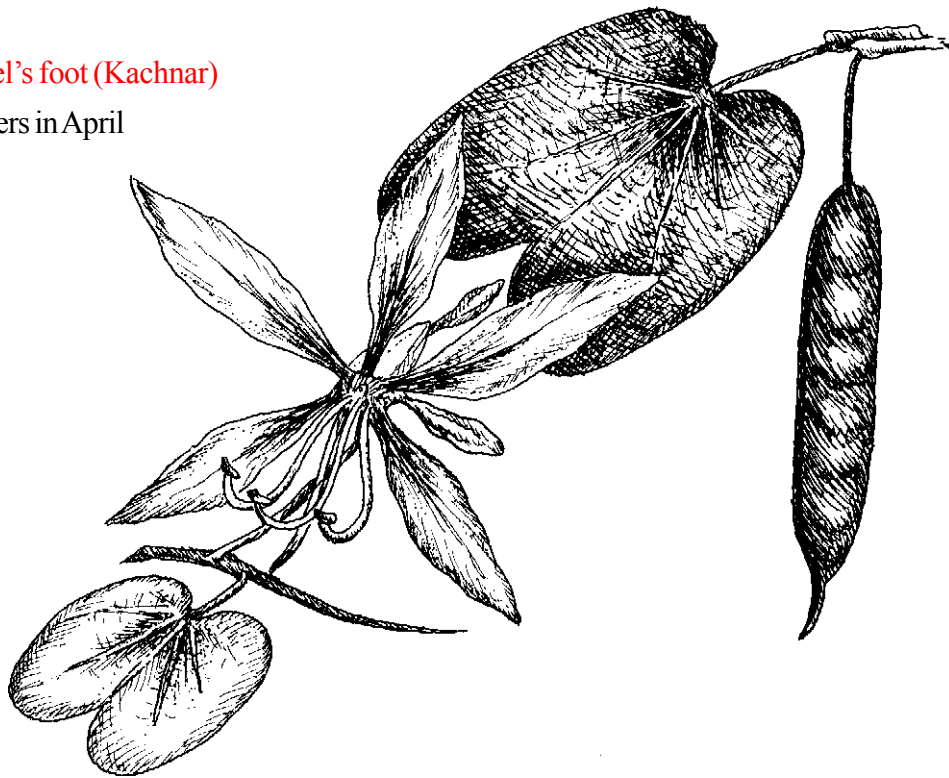
flowers from July till September.



Flowers from July till September.

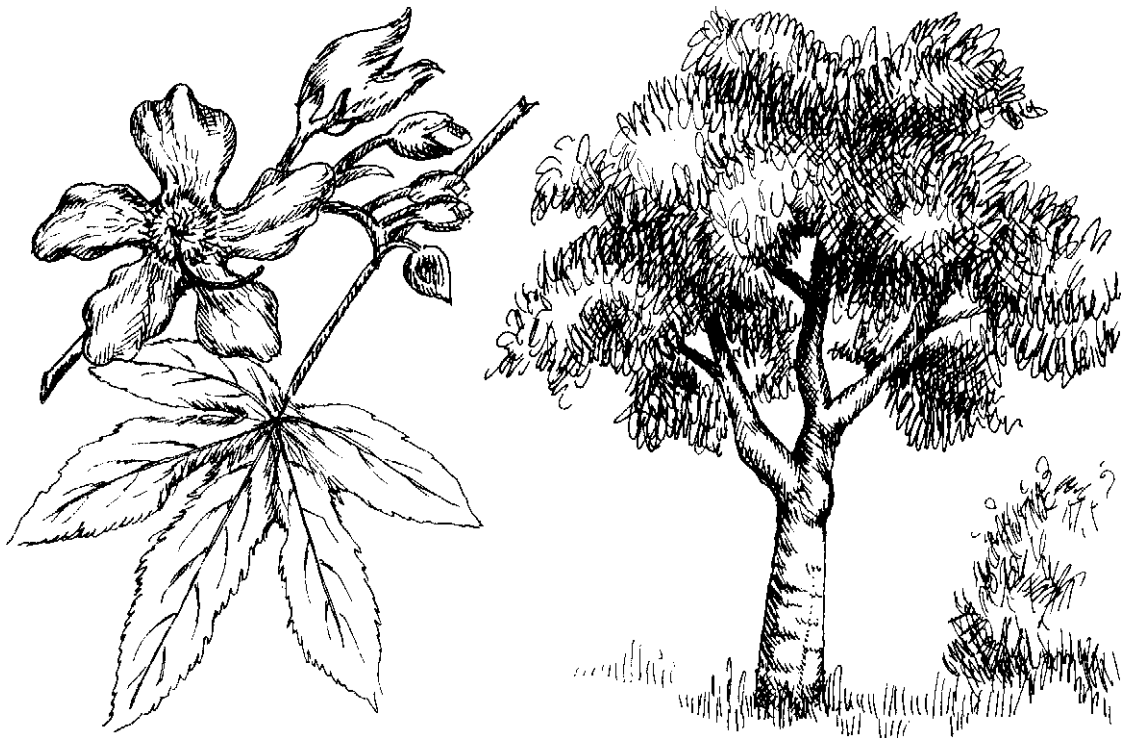
Camel's foot (Kachnar)

Flowers in April



Mexican Silk Cotton

Flowers in October and November



7. We Also Live in Delhi

Ramu was writing to a friend in England. Here's what he wrote:

Dear Edward,

Last Saturday my friends and I went to the Delhi Zoo. It is a very pretty zoo, partly because it is built in front of a grand stone fort.* (The fort is more than 400 years old! - 200 years older than the USA! Fancy that!) It is also a very ~~happy~~ zoo, because very few of the animals are in cages. I have been to the zoo many times, and I have some favourite animals. I like the lions - they look so scornful that I feel they think we look very boring and ordinary. The brown bear was very ~~fr~~ friendly; and seemed to be smiling.

My friend Pamela says her grandfather told her that he had seen tigers in Karolbagh! Can you believe that? It would be like telling someone that you had seen tigers in New York!

My mother says that when she was small, there were lots of jackals in New Delhi, who used to ~~howl~~ howl at night because all the building that was going on used to disturb them! I wish there were some wild animals now in Delhi - instead of the poor creatures in the zoo!

But we do have lots of birds, thousands of ~~parake~~ parakeets and bulbuls and mynahs and

Ramu had wandered off, and his letter was lying on his table. His mother asked whether she could read it.

‘Poor Ramu,’ she said affectionately. ‘You’re finding everything so dull—when you try to be an archaeologist, you find only earthworms, and when you want to see wild animals, you see only...’

Tame cats,’ completed Ramu.

‘I could tell you of something interesting to do,’ said his mother. ‘You could be a bird-watcher.’

‘And count sparrows and mynas?’ said Ramu. ‘I want to see *exciting* birds like the ones in the aviary in the zoo.’

‘You may not see African cockatoos,’ his mother replied. ‘But you can certainly see more than sparrows and mynas, if you keep your eyes open. Let me give you a diary, and you keep a list of what you see. You are lucky to live in Delhi. It has so many parks and trees that it attracts lots of birds.’

The next morning Ramu started his new hobby. He was soon to tell his mother of his first find. ‘I’ve found a nest with three dotted pink eggs in it,’ he called out. ‘Don’t touch the eggs,’ his mother told him. Then the birds will be frightened. Now find out which bird it is.

Ramu watched from a corner, and saw a lovely bird flying down into the nest. He called his mother. It’s a bulbul/ she told him, and gave him some stale bread to crumble and put out for the birds.

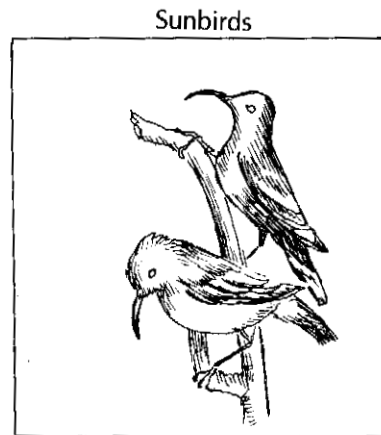
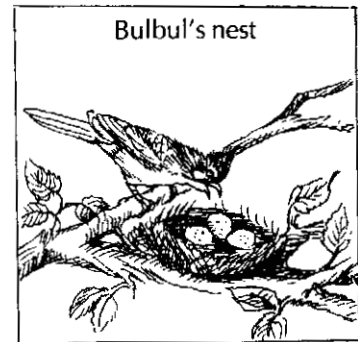
‘What is the bird that sits on the *chajja* and makes a sound like water gurgling in a bottle?’

That’s a nice description,’ smiled his mother. That’s a green pigeon.’

Next day, on his way to school, he saw a very lovely black bird with a forked tail on a telephone wire.

‘Is it a crow?’ he asked.

‘No, that’s a drongo,’ said his mother. ‘Go into the garden and look at the tecoma creeper. Is there anybody drinking nectar from the orange flowers?’



Ramu saw them—a tiny purple bird and a dull brown one. He learned that they were sunbirds. Another bird was swinging on a branch—it was brownish green, with a fat white tummy and a red cap. That’s a tailor-bird,’ said his mother, showing him a picture of its nest.

When they went for walks in the gardens of Humayun’s Tomb, he loved to watch the parakeets screeching overhead. He discovered that if you sat on the wall of Purana Qila near the zoo, you could see the birds coming to the zoo lake—storks, cormorants, pelicans... And in winter, once while they were in the school playground, he saw something in the sky which he first thought were planes flying in formation. It was the Siberian cranes, who left the cold Russian winter and came to Delhi and to places like the *jheels* at Sultanpur and Bharatpur.



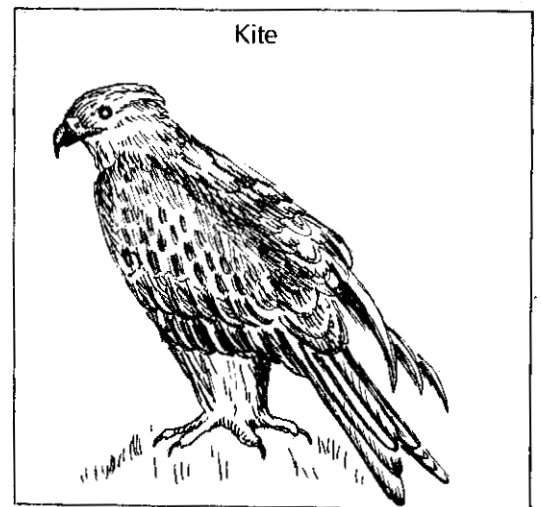
Cranes in formation

And how did Ramu know that winter was over, and that summer was coming? He heard the gentle call of the *koyal* in the morning.

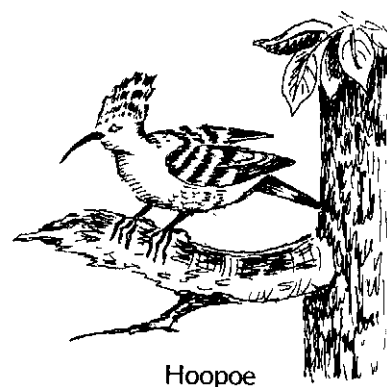
Sometimes, just as he was falling asleep at night, he would hear a shrill voice crying ‘Did he do it?’ It was the voice of the lapwing, the lovely black and white bird with dainty long legs.

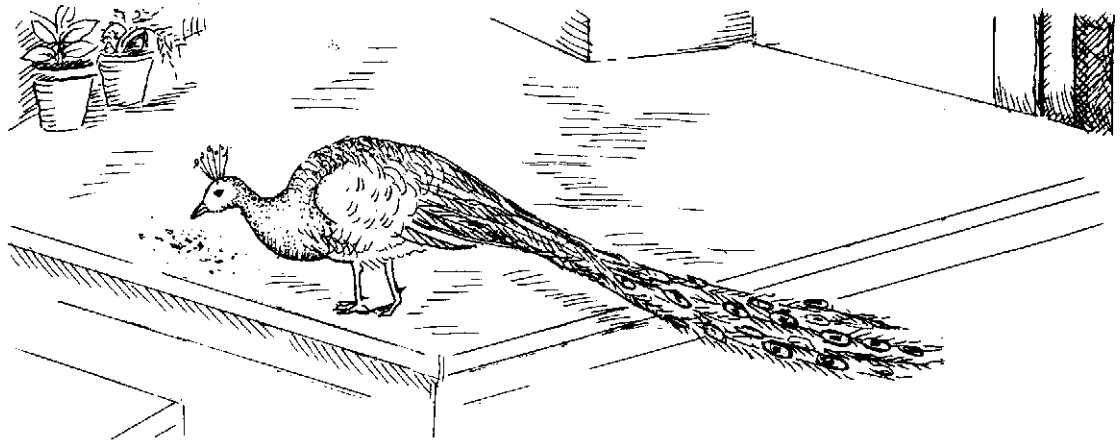
Ramu’s friends began to call him ‘Ramu Head-in-Clouds’ after he spotted a kite’s nest on a tall tree near school, and kept watching the parent kites teaching the young kites to fly. In late summer, he waited for the young swallows—tiny birds who darted about just above the grass, and with great speed. His favourite bird was the hoopoe—the ‘zebra bird’ as he called it at first—black and white, with an orange crest.

Ramu and his other friends loved going to Salim’s house, because of the pigeons. Salim’s older brother and some of his friends had tame pigeons, and once they showed the children a pigeon-fight. ‘In the old days,’ said Salim’s grandfather, ‘when people did not spend the evening watching television, pigeon-fights and cock-fights used to be among our hobbies.’ Ramu also loved the fat plump partridges he spotted near Tughlakabad. And loveliest of all was what Jaya showed them near her house—peacocks sitting on the roofs of houses, with their tails draped over the edge.



Oh yes, his mother had been right. There were many more kinds of birds in Delhi than the sparrows and mynas!





Meanings

scornful: with no respect

howl: loud cry

archaeologist: a person who digs up and studies ancient remains of buildings, tools, pottery, etc.

stale: not fresh

gurgling: bubbling sound in

formation: in a pattern

spotted: saw, noticed

darted: moved suddenly

draped: covered

This chapter shows that:

There are many types of birds in Delhi, which make their homes in trees or on water, and inside houses. Some birds come from far-away cold places to Delhi in winter.

Exercises

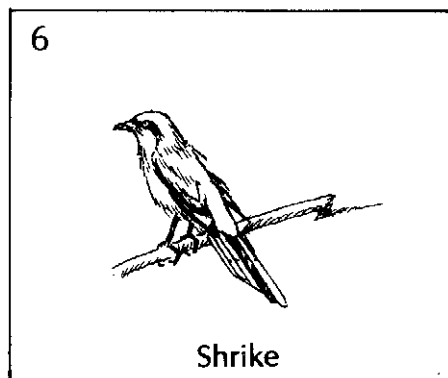
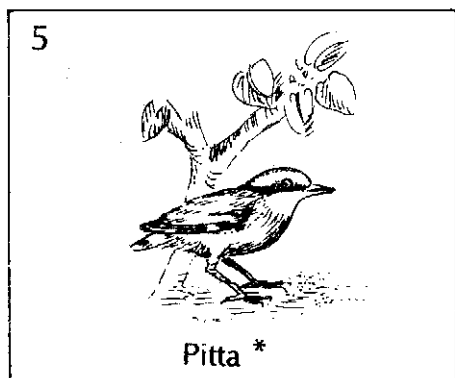
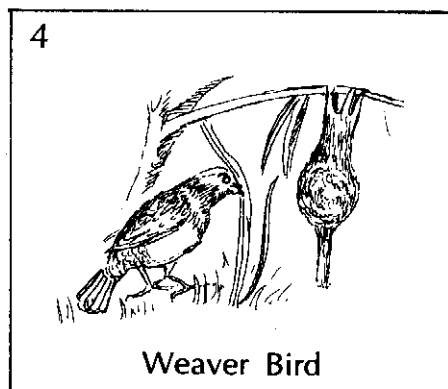
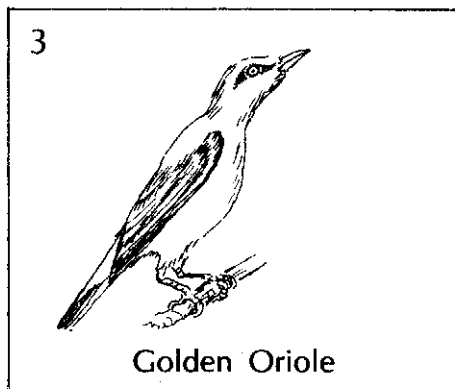
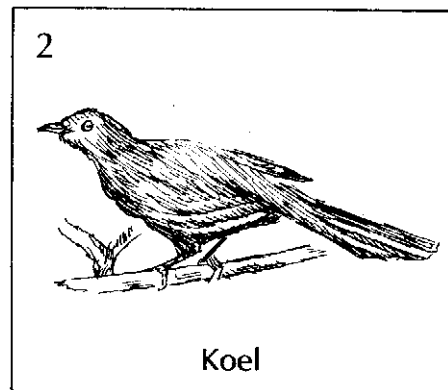
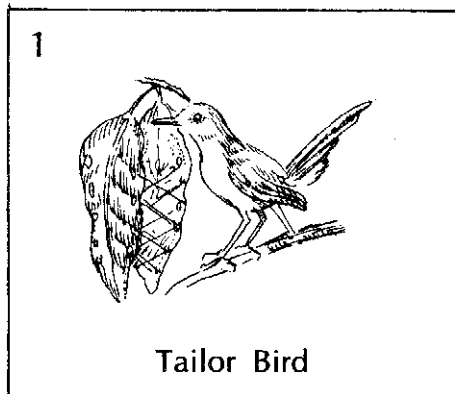
1. Which of the following birds are found in Delhi?

penguin, hoopoe, seagull, eagle, vulture, bee-eater, robin

2. Write 10 sentences on a visit to Delhi Zoo.

3. Keep a diary of the birds you see each day, for one week. {After that, you will get so interested, you will continue it without being told!}

Meet some more Delhi birds.



8. Our Houses

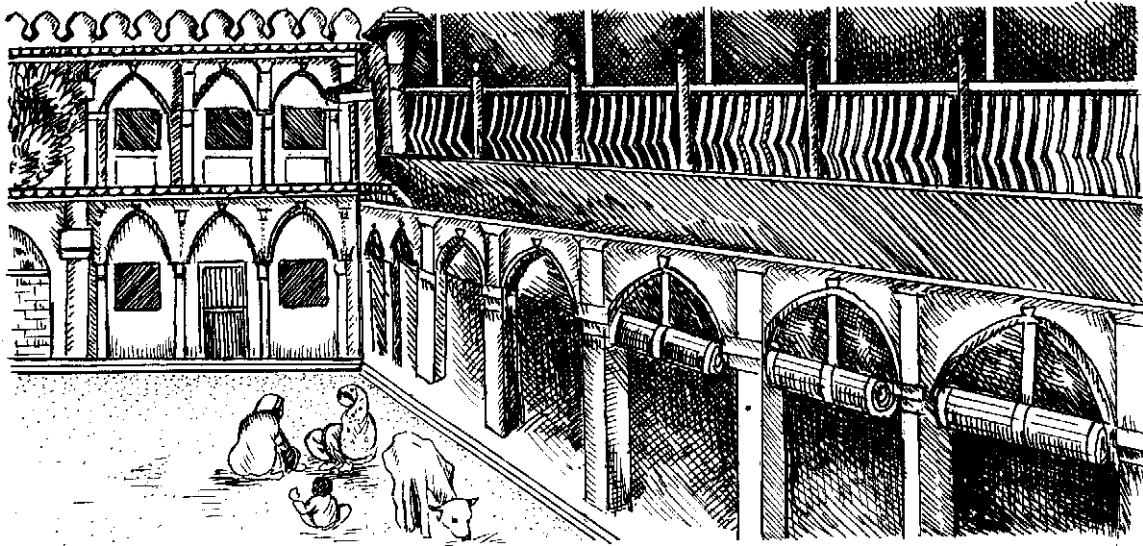
Archana had gone with her mother to buy provisions from Khari Baoli. She remembered talking about water in class, and knew that Khari Baoli meant ‘the step well with salty water’. She told her mother this, proud of knowing it. ‘You are clever,’ said her mother. ‘I never thought of that. When I think of Khari Baoli, I smell lovely spices,’ she said, watching the shopkeeper weigh the garam-masala.

‘Oh, yes,’ said Archana. ‘Khari Baoli is a wholesale market, isn’t it?’ She was really feeling very clever today!

They had finished their shopping. ‘Can we go and visit Salim?’ asked Archana. ‘He lives very near.’ Her mother agreed. Their shopping-bags were heavy, so they took a cycle-rickshaw. They went along the narrow lanes, the driver merrily tinkling his bell so that people moved out of the way.

‘What narrow lanes!’ said Archana. ‘And so winding. Why did people make them so narrow?’

‘Because at the time they were made, people did not have cars, cycle-rickshaws or cycles. They walked or rode in *palkis*. So a narrow road was enough. And curving narrow roads with two-storeyed houses on each side make the road very cool and pleasant.’



‘Yes,’ said Archana. ‘It’s such a hot day, but in this lane it feels very cool.’

Just then they reached Hafiz Manzil. They entered through a narrow door and went in. Inside was a courtyard, with rooms all round it. It was quiet and cool. It was difficult to believe that there was a noisy lane just outside. Archana thought that in a house like this, there was no need for fans and coolers.

‘Why are new houses so hot and old ones cool?’ she asked her mother later, when they were going home.

‘Old houses were built without concrete, which makes walls hot. Concrete can’t breathe!’

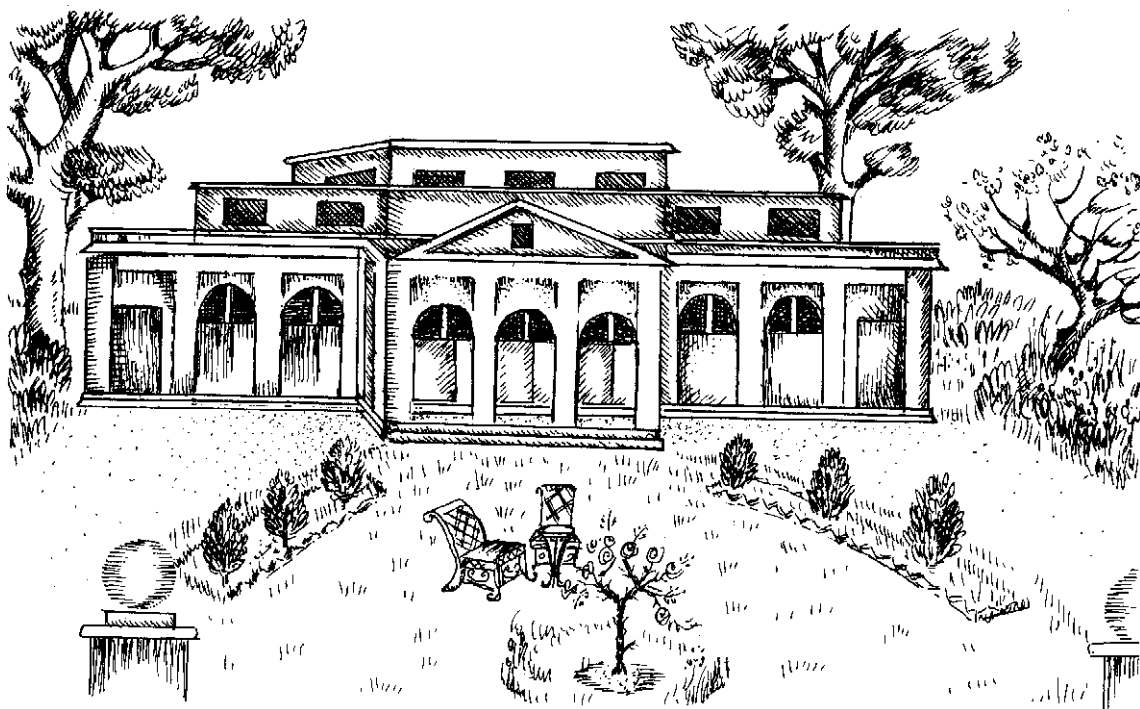
Archana looked suspiciously at her mother. Was she teasing her? ‘How can *walls* breathe?’ she asked.

‘Mud walls have very tiny holes in them through which air can enter. Stone walls which are joined by mud also have these holes. When air comes in and out of the walls, it keeps them cool.’

‘Like a *surahi*?’ asked Archana.

‘Exactly!’ said her mother. There are other reasons, too. Old houses were built around a courtyard. The windows opened into the courtyard. The sunlight came into the middle, but did not heat up the rooms in the way houses facing outwards get heated up. Also, rooms had high ceilings. Tall rooms are cooler than low ones.’

‘Yes, in Pamela’s house there are high ceilings, and big verandahs. They are such large rooms!’

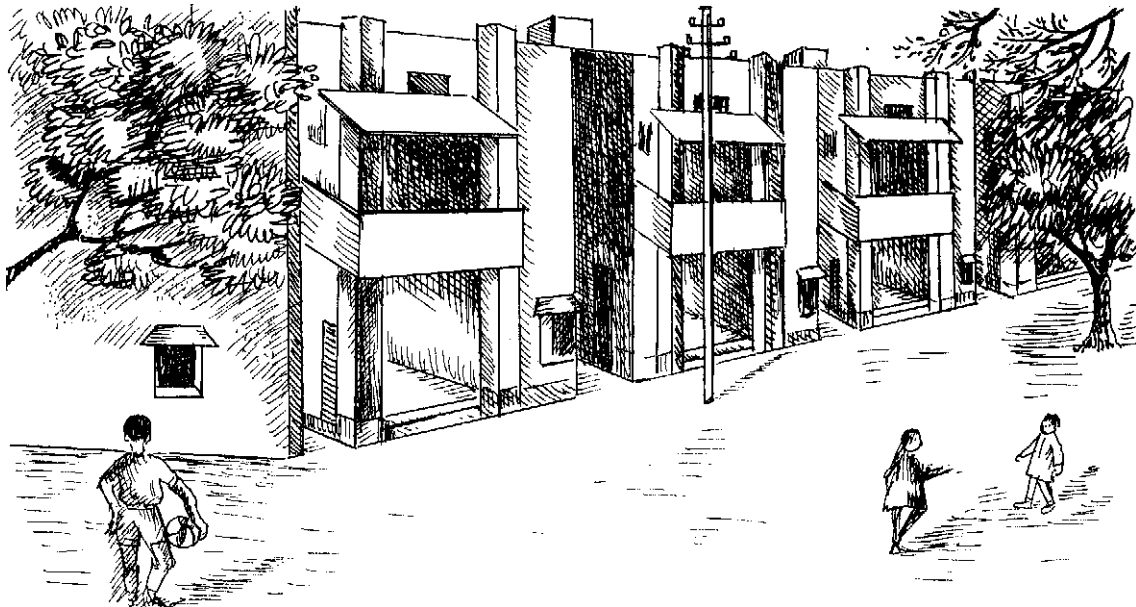


Those houses were built later than Salim's. They were built by the British. You will see that the houses of Shahjahanabad are narrower and close together; the British houses, in the Civil Lines and in New Delhi, are big and each is in a garden of its own. They are very beautiful houses, but I would not like to live in one of them! The kitchen is so far from the dining-room that the food gets cold by the time you start eating. Houses like that are all right if there are lots of people to work for you.

Archana also thought her own house was more cosy, though it was small. She liked eating in the spotless little kitchen, where her mother served her hot *chapathis* straight from the stove. Salim's house had also looked very friendly.

She said this to her mother. Mrs Sharma agreed. 'Houses used to be small, and now again most of them are small. In earlier times people built small houses because they lived simply, with one room used for many purposes. Houses are again becoming small, because it is expensive to build big houses, and because there is not enough space left in big cities for large houses.

'Yes,' said Archana, remembering Chitra's flat in Sarojini Nagar. It was nice to live in small flats, because then you had lots of neighbours, and lots of friends! She laughed as she remembered something. Chitra, when she first came to Delhi, had been so confused by the houses in Sarojini Nagar, which all looked alike, that she had gone into the wrong one!



She told her mother about this. 'Yes,' smiled her mother. The government 'colonies' and 'nagars' do look rather alike. But when people build their own houses, they usually look different from each other.'

Archana remembered something else. 'What is a *mohalla*?' she asked.

'A *mohalla* used to have a gate, which was locked at night, for safety. All the families in a *mohalla* knew each other very well. Now, because it is easier to travel about, we can visit friends living at greater distances, not just those in our *mohalla*.'

As Archana snuggled into her bed that night, she thought that she would like to be an architect when she grew up. She would like to build houses which would be cosy as well as pretty. Half-asleep, she remembered vividly a small *jhuggi* she had passed on a winter's evening, where the children sat around a warm fire while their mother, beautiful in her colourful Rajasthani skirt, made chapathis. There were so many people who did not have houses, but who seemed cheerful. She would build houses for them, she promised herself, where they would be happy but also secure, with no danger of a thatched roof catching fire from a kerosene stove.

Meanings

weigh : find out how heavy something is

wholesale: selling large amounts of goods to shopkeepers

suspicious: not sure whether to believe

expensive: costing a lot of money

confused: not clear

architect: person who makes plans for houses

vivid: very bright or clear

thatch: roof of dried straw

secure: safe

This chapter shows that:

Houses are built of different materials, some of mud, some of brick. In olden days, the houses of ordinary people were small and built close together.

In the British period and later, many large houses were built, with big gardens. Today we want to build homes for millions of people, so houses are again made small.

Exercises

1. Write true/false against the following :

- Concrete makes a building cool.
- High ceilings make a building cool.
- A winding lane gives shade.
- A straight road gives shade.
- Thatched roofs catch fire easily.

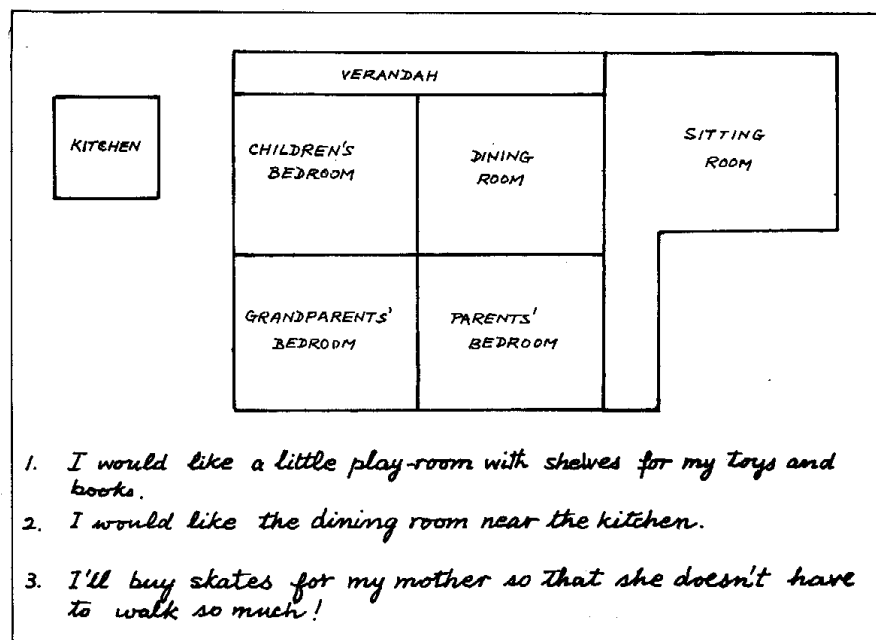
2. Write 5 sentences to explain the difference between the way houses were built in earlier days and the way they are built now.

3. Draw a picture of your house. On a separate sheet, draw a plan of it.

If you could make changes in your house, would you make any? Why?

Here is an example of Pamela's work:

Do you think all of Pamela's ideas are sensible?



9. Our Shops

It was Saturday morning. Jaya sat up in bed, wondering as she did every Saturday why it was that she always got up early on holidays and late on school days! When she came out she saw her mother buying milk from the *gwala*. As he got on to his cycle again and rode away, his cans clinking, Jaya asked her mother, 'Where does he live?'

'In Khanpur,' her mother replied. 'It is near Tughlakabad. It is one of the many villages in Delhi.'

Jaya thought it funny that there should be villages in a town.

'More and more people and more and more offices keep coming to Delhi,' her father explained. 'To make buildings for them, the fields of villages are bought by the Delhi Development Authority. When the buildings come up, it is very difficult to remember that the area was once a village. When I was a boy, most of the area now called South Delhi was fields. We used to buy fresh vegetables from the farmers every evening.'

'We still buy fresh vegetables, don't we?' asked Jaya, remembering how a cousin who lived in England had told her they bought frozen vegetables.

Just then the *sabziwala* came round the corner, loudly calling out the names of the vegetables he had in his basket. Jaya loved looking at the vegetables—they seemed like jewels—purple brinjals, bright orange carrots, rich green capsicums—'Why are they called Shimla *mirch*?' she asked.

'Because they grow in the hills in Shimla in summer, when it is too hot to grow them in Delhi.'

'What a lot of places fruit and vegetables come from,' thought Jaya,

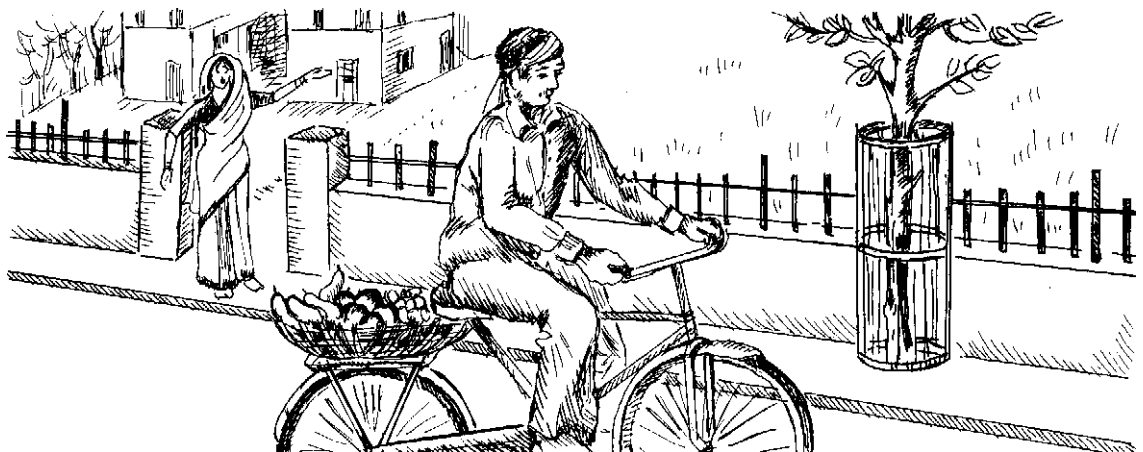
'Langda mangoes from Banaras!'

'Apples from Kashmir!'

'Oranges from Nagpur!'

She had heard the fruit-sellers call. It seemed very exciting to think of fruit travelling all that way.

'It is possible because of the railways,' her father said. 'Fruits have always been carried long distances in India, but they were very expensive because it cost so much to carry them. When I was a child, apples were a great treat, because they were so difficult to get. Now apples and pears are quite cheap, because such large quantities are brought in trucks and trains.'



'Do the *phalwalas* go to the railway station to get them?' asked Jaya.

The fruits and vegetables first go to a wholesale market. The shopkeepers there sell them in smaller amounts to retail shopkeepers and *sabziwalas* or *phalwalas*. A fruit is cheapest where it grows; it costs a little more at the wholesale shop and still more when the *phalwala* sells it.'

'Where are the wholesale markets?' asked Jaya, munching a tender, raw carrot.

'In Mehrauli and Azadpur. It used to be near the Ridge, in a place still called Sabzi Mandi. This was a very old *mandi*, and the Grand Trunk Road came into Shahjahanabad at that point. Markets used to be outside the city wall because there was a tax on all goods going into the town. The wholesale market was shifted from there some years ago because the area had got too crowded.'

Jaya went into the kitchen for her cup of milk. That reminded her of something else. ‘Why does Chitra’s family buy milk in plastic packets, and not from a *gwala*?’

Her mother lifted the pan of milk off the stove. They may not have a *gwala* living near them. Your father was telling you that there are now a lot of people in Delhi. There is not enough fresh milk for them, especially as there is less land in the city for cows and buffaloes to graze on. So milk is brought from other places, in big refrigerated vans. This is pasteurized milk, which is very pure. It is then bottled or packed in plastic, and sold.’

It was an especially nice day, because her parents also had a holiday. In the afternoon they went out to do some shopping. Jaya made out a list for her mother. Jaya and her brother Anil enjoyed the long bus ride to Connaught Place.

‘Cannot place what?’ asked Anil. Jaya laughed. ‘*Connaught* Place’ she corrected him. But then she had to turn to her father. ‘What *is* Connaught?’ she asked.

‘It is a market that was named after the brother of King George V, the Duke of Connaught. It was part of New Delhi which was built in the 1920s. Till that time there was only one big retail shopping centre, Chandni Chowk. The round design of Connaught Place was copied from an English town called Bath. It is rather crowded with cars now, but when it was first built, people used to ride in horse carriages, so it was a very pleasant and quiet place. Just as your grandfather used to say that Chandni Chowk was a wonderful place to walk in and sit in. There was a platform in the centre, which had lovely old trees along it. If they had not been cut down, how cool Chandni Chowk would be!’

Jaya’s mother sighed. ‘In some ways, shopping must have been so different in the old days. It was like going to visit someone, and you sat for a long-time, looked at everything slowly, chatted to the shopkeeper. But for people in a hurry, like me, it is convenient to have a place like this,’ she said, as they went up the steps of the Superbazar.

‘What is a department store?’ asked Jaya, reading the board outside.

‘It is an American idea, where in one building you have different departments selling different types of things, so that you do not have to go from one shop to another.’



Later, on the bus going home, Jaya remembered that she had forgotten to buy a sharpener for school. ‘Never mind,’ she thought. ‘I’ll buy it at the local shop tomorrow. It is a good thing it is open on Sunday. ‘Why don’t the shops in Chiragh Delhi have a holiday on Sunday, as we all do?’ she asked.

‘That’s a very convenient rule’, said her mother. ‘Different shopping areas in Delhi have their holiday on different days of the week, so that every day you will find some shop somewhere open. And some shops, which sell medicines, are open day and night, so that you can buy medicines if someone is ill suddenly at night’

‘Wholesale shops, retail shops, department stores....,’ murmured Jaya as she looked at all the people with heavy shopping bags. ‘What a lot of things come to Delhi, by train, bus, truck and cycle—just so that we get our food and clothes and books. Does Delhi sell anything to other villages and towns?’ she wondered. She saved up the question for later, because the bus had just reached Chiragh Delhi and they had to get off.

Meanings

frozen: cold as ice

retail: selling goods to the public in small quantities

mandi: market

refrigerated: frozen

pasteurized: purified (milk) by heating it

department store: a large shop that sells many kinds of goods

This chapter shows that:

In a big city, where people need many things, there are many types of shops—a few big wholesale ones, many small retail shops and some department stores. Supplies come from far-away places by train or truck.

Exercises

1. Write true/false against the following:

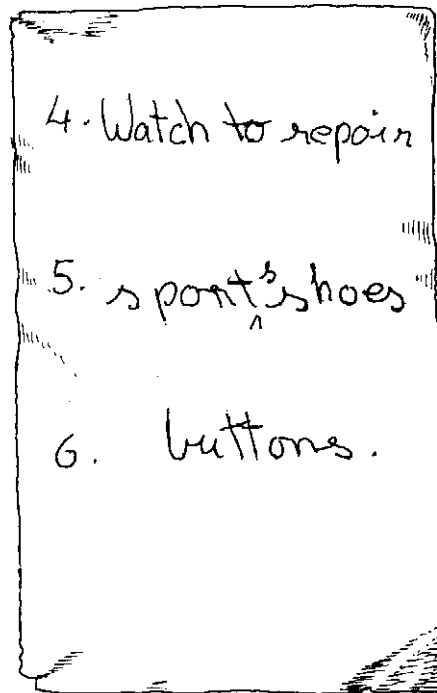
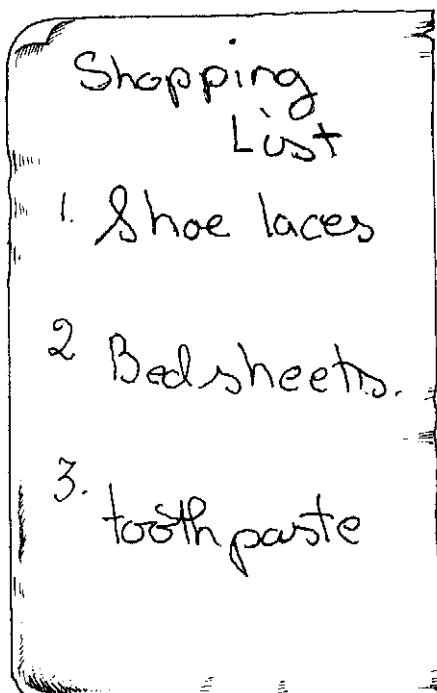
- a. The Superbazar is a retail shop.
- b. Azadpur is a department store,
- c. The *gwala* sells pasteurized milk.
- d. Bookshops stay open all night.
- e. Apples grow in Delhi.

2. Name 2 wholesale and 3 retail shopping-centres in Delhi.

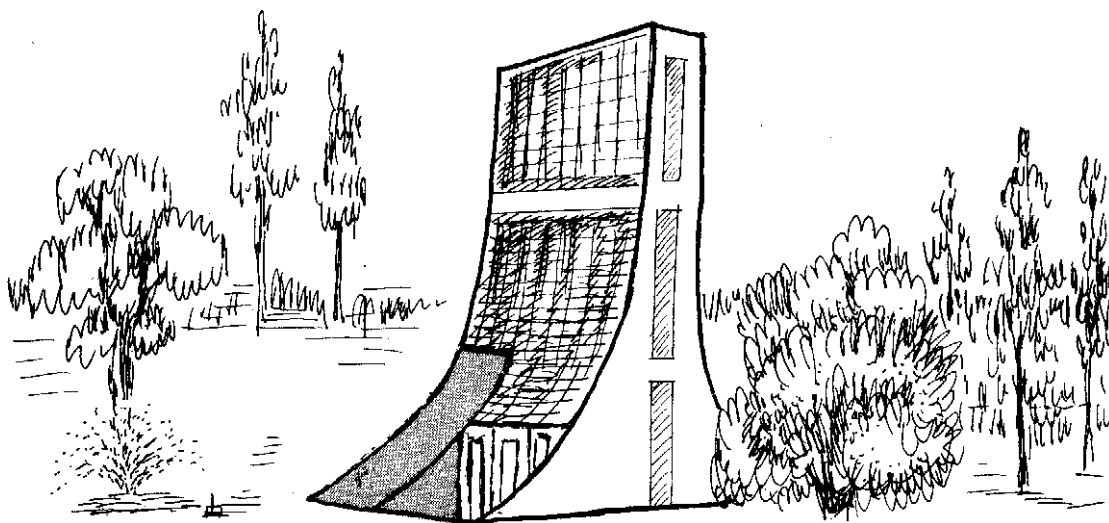
3. In five sentences, describe the journey of a mango from Banaras to your dining-table.

For the parent:

Make the child draw up the list when you next go shopping, and teach him how to tick off the items, and later to write accounts. Here is how Jaya did it:



10. Who Governs Delhi?



‘What is a Light Governor?’ asked Sumit. He was reading a notice which said that the ‘Lt-Governor of Delhi’ was to give away prizes at an art competition.

Miss Verma laughed. ‘Lieutenant-Governor,’ she corrected him (pronouncing it Left-en-ant). ‘He is the highest official in Delhi State.’

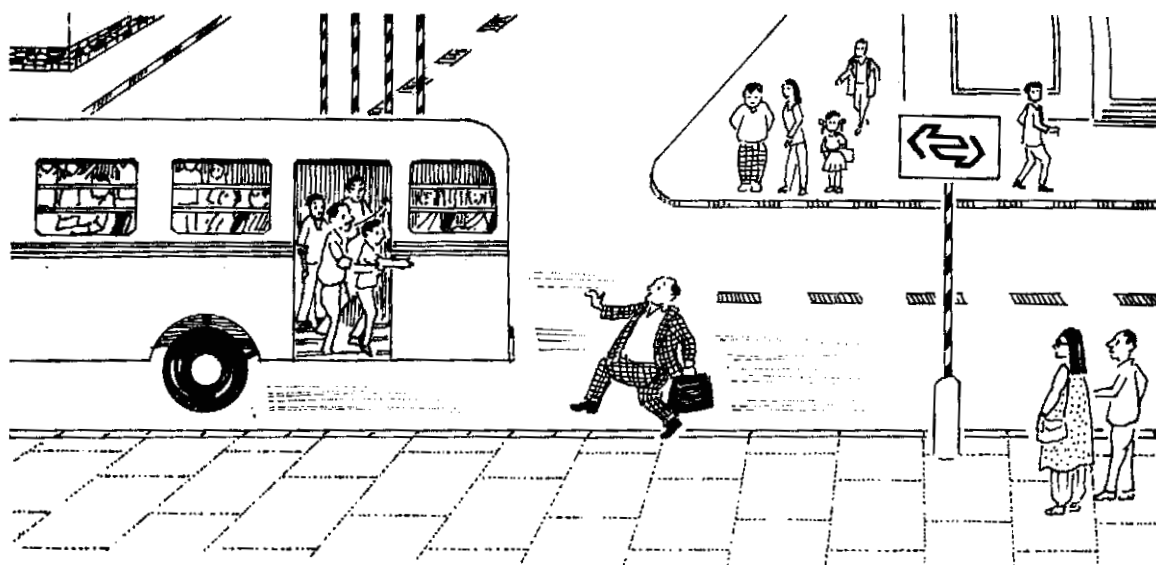
‘What about the President?’ asked Pamela.

Miss Verma decided to explain it to them. ‘Delhi is the capital of India. It is also a big city. Therefore it has two sets of government: one is the city’s government and the other is the country’s government. The President of India lives in Delhi, in Rashtrapati Bhavan. The Indian Parliament, with members from all over the country, is also in Delhi. The officers of the central government are in the Secretariat and in other buildings.

There is also the Lt-Governor, who is for Delhi what the President is for India. There is a Metropolitan Council, which is a parliament for Delhi. Its members represent the people in different parts of Delhi.

‘Like class-prefects,’ said Pamela.

‘But there are two areas which are not represented in the Council. These are the Cantonment and the New Delhi Municipality. The Cantonment is controlled by the army. The Municipality, which is where all the central government’s offices and houses are, is governed separately. There are more than sixty-two lakh people in Delhi, so there is a lot of work for the local government.’



Is Delhi the biggest city in India?’ asked Sumit.

‘Bombay and Calcutta have more people. Delhi comes next. Now, can you tell me all the things government has to do for these people?’

They have to see that there are enough hospitals...

‘and schools...

‘and houses...

‘and buses...

‘and water...

‘and food!’

‘Keep the town clean!’

‘Have enough policemen to frighten away robbers!’

Miss Verma laughed. ‘Yes, I think you have managed to think of most of the important things. In a place like Delhi which is *growing*—that is, more and more people keep coming to the city to live here—it is very difficult to do enough. That is why every day you will hear someone grumble—about the high rents of houses or not having got enough water in a second-floor flat—’

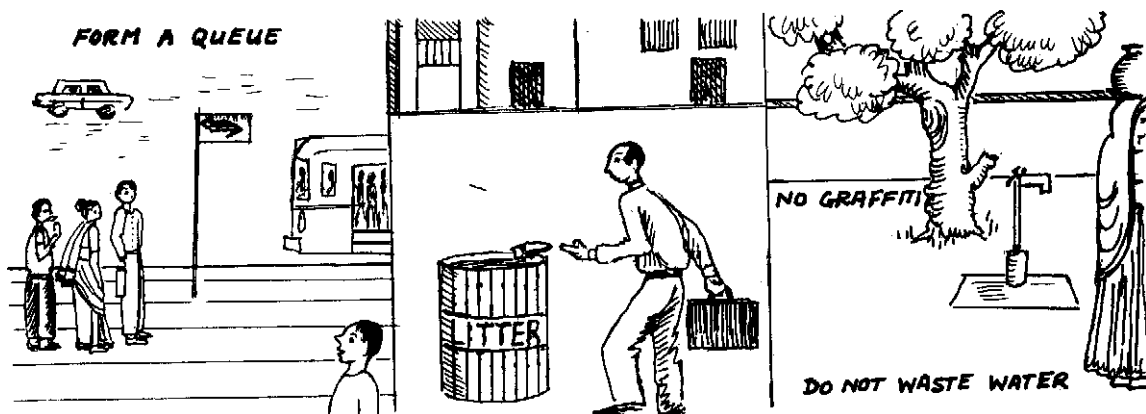
‘Or the price of vegetables,’ said Java, remembering her mother complaining about the high cost of tomatoes.

‘Or the rubbish lying in the back lane,’ said Chetan, thinking of the lane behind his house.

‘Or about thieves breaking in,’ added Ramu, remembering a news-item his father had read out that morning.

‘Or missing a bus,’ said Sumit, who had got up late that morning.

‘My grandfather is always talking about “the good old days”,’ said Pamela. ‘He says everything was cheaper then, and food tasted better, and people were nicer.



‘I wonder,’ said Miss Verma, ‘whether that is really true. Things were cheaper, but people also earned less money. In many ways, as a town grows, things get better as well as worse. There are far more hospitals now than there were forty years ago, more schools and colleges. When I was your age (‘Can you imagine Miss Verma with two plaits and in a tunic and blouse!’ whispered Ramu, grinning), there were very few buses in Delhi, and we had to wait hours to get one.

‘What I want you to understand is that it is not only the Municipality or the Corporation that governs Delhi. You also do! Instead of grumbling, it would be so much better if people would do things—can you suggest things which would make Delhi a better town?’

‘Form a queue at the bus-stop, and not push other people.’

‘Not waste water.’

‘Yes,’ said Miss Verma ‘and also not let water form pools where mosquitoes can live comfortably.

‘Not throw garbage outside, but only in covered dustbins—’

‘Or throw litter in parks, or write on buildings.’

‘Cross roads carefully, and teach grown-ups to drive carefully,’ added Chitra, who had seen a truck being driven much too fast that morning.

‘I’d like to see that people did not blow their horns so loudly,’ put in Jaya.

‘Don’t you think,’ said Miss Verma, ‘that if you did all this and taught others to be proud of their city, too, Delhi could be a very nice place to live in?’

‘And then,’ said Ramu thoughtfully, ‘when we are old we won’t talk of the good *old* days, but the good new days.’

Meanings

represent: act for other people. A representative is a person who ‘acts’ for many people. At elections, people vote to choose a person who will represent them in the Metropolitan Council, State Assembly or Parliament.

garbage: rubbish

This chapter shows that:

Governing a city is done by hundreds of people. They have to take care of the needs of many lakhs of people. Delhi is still growing and being built. There are many ways in which its government should improve it. There are also lots of ways in which we, the citizens of Delhi, can make it a better place to live in. Remember, the city belongs not just to you, but to sixty-two lakhs of other people!

Exercises

1. Fill in the blanks

a. The head of the Government of India is called the

b. The head of the government of Delhi is called the

c. The area where the army lives is called the

d. New Delhi is governed by a

e. Delhi is governed by a

(choose from: Municipal Committee, Lieutenant-Governor, President, Cantonment, Corporation)

2. Suppose you were Lieutenant-Governor of Delhi for a week.

Write 10 sentences on the things you would do or ask people to do.

3. Write one sentence to explain what each of the following is:

(a) an electricity meter (b) traffic lights (c) zebra crossing (d) dust-bin (e) water-tank

For the teacher/parent

Take the child to see the Lok Sabha or the Rajya Sabha in session.

11. Festivals

Salim was enjoying his holiday. It was Id-ul-Fitr. He could smell the rich sweet sevaiya pudding being cooked. He liked the feel of his nice new clothes—a crisp kurta and pajama, shining white. In the morning he went with his father to the Jama Masjid for the Id prayers. When he saw all the lanes leading to the mosque full of people dressed in new clothes like him, a friendly crowd greeting each other with ‘Id Mubarak’, he felt happy. On ordinary days people were usually in a hurry and had no time to stop and talk.

The next day, when he was chatting with his friends, Chetan said ‘We also get new clothes for Diwali—I think I shall ask my mother for a good strong pair of jeans this time, to climb trees in!’

‘Diwali is so pretty,’ said Chitra. ‘When the sky becomes dark blue, and the *diyas* and candles are lit in people’s verandahs, it looks so beautiful. Are the *masjids* lit up for Id?’ she asked Salim. He nodded. ‘And because of the shape of the domes, they look like glowing onions.’

‘And Rashtrapati Bhavan on Republic Day looks like a shining turnip’, laughed Ramu. But then he became serious. ‘Isn’t it nice that Delhi has so many buildings with different shapes?’

‘I love Dassehra,’ said Archana. ‘We went to see the big Ram Lila last year. Ravana was so huge!’ said the little girl.



‘My grandfather told me that Emperor Bahadur Shah complained that he could not see the Ram Lila from his palace windows. So, as a special favour, one year they held it on the banks of the Yamuna below the Red Fort!’

‘Durga Puja is also fun,’ said Chitra. ‘I saw the craftsmen making the image of Durga. I wish I could do it.’

‘Isn’t that a Bengali festival?’ asked Sumit.

‘Yes, but there have been lots of Bengalis in Delhi for over 100 years. The “oldest” Puja is at Kashmiri Gate where the Bengalis used to live earlier. Now there are many all over Delhi.’

‘What I like about Durga Puja,’ said Chitra, ‘is that it goes on for five days, and so many things happen—plays, films, children’s art competitions..’

‘What I like is the way everyone celebrates *all* festivals,’ said Pamela. ‘Do you remember how last year we did not have a Christmas cake or tree because my mother was away? And Archana’s mother asked me over and gave me a proper Christmas party! This year you must all come with me to St. James’ Church. They have a lovely Christmas fete.’

‘It will be like a mela,’ said Ramu. ‘I like melas. I went to the Ram Navami mela at Kalkaji Mandir. There were such crowds of people, I had to hold my father’s hand tight.’



There are melas at Hanuman Mandir also. My grandfather says these melas are old—they have been happening for hundreds of years.

‘What is the Phulwalon Ki Sair?’ asked Chitra.

That’s a festival held in Mehrauli in October. Hindus and Muslims both take part in it, and there are dances, puppet shows and a procession by the flower-sellers. That’s also old—it was first begun about 200 years ago.’

‘Is Republic Day a festival?’ asked Jaya.

‘Not a religious one, but one to celebrate 26 January 1950, when India got a President of her own. Till then the head of the government had been the British King.’

Jaya was getting confused. ‘What is Independence Day, then?’

That was on 15 August 1947, when India became independent completely, except that the British King was kept as head of the government. On the morning of 15 August 1947 Jawaharlal Nehru raised the Indian flag—the tricolour—on the Red Fort, and hundreds of people were there to see it, and to shout “Jai Hind”. That is why Independence Day is celebrated at the Red Fort, though the Republic Day parade is in front of the President’s house.’

When you think of the festivals in Delhi they make you realize what an old town it is, for Id and Mohurram, Ram Lila, Ram Navami, the Jain rath jattras, and the Sikh prayers in Sisganj Gurdwara, have gone on for hundreds of years. Delhi is also lucky in having in it people from all over India, so that its children grow up understanding so much about the rest of their country.

Meanings

crisp: hard and dry

craftsmen: people who make beautiful things with their hands

procession: group of people and vehicles moving forward in an orderly way

unfurled: unrolled, spread out

This chapter shows that:

There have always been many festivals in India. Some of these are connected with some religion; others celebrate certain seasons, like the end of the monsoon or the end of winter. In Delhi many festivals are celebrated with great enjoyment.

Exercises

1. Pair the following correctly:

Jama Masjid	Independence Day
Red Fort	Christmas
Kalka Mandir	Id
St. James' Church	Phulwalon Ki Sair
Mehrauli	Ram Navami Mela

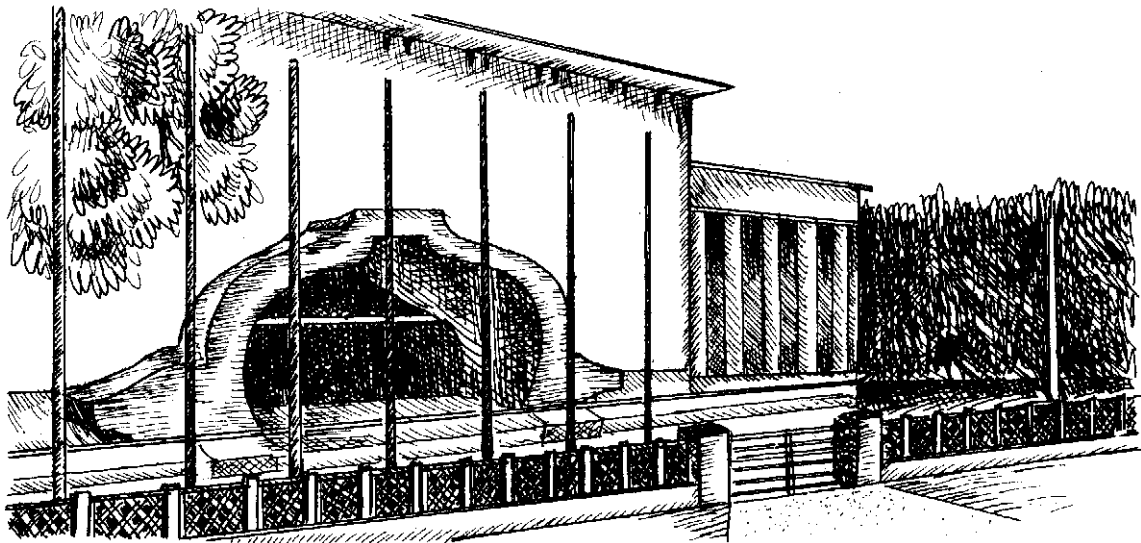
2. Look up a list of holidays in a diary. Choose any 10 of them; and write one sentence to explain what each is about.

3. Write 5 sentences to describe your favourite festival. Draw a picture showing one of Delhi's festivals.

A Note from Salim

We forgot our special day! 14 November is Children's Day. This was the birthday of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. He was our first prime minister and he was also very fond of children. Watch out for special functions on 14 November, in Bal Bhavan and Teen Murti House.

12. A Holiday Excursion



Miss Verma had asked the children to write about the most interesting thing they had done in the winter vacation. 'And please,' she begged, smiling, 'don't all of you write about the Zoo!'

The eight friends discussed it among themselves. It turned out that each of them had a different experience to write about. 'Mine is the most *modern*,' said Ramu, who had been taken to see a model of a spaceship at Vigyan Bhavan, and some films on space-travel afterwards. The model had been displayed on the lawns of Vigyan Bhavan, because it was too big to be put in a room. Ramu had also managed to have a look inside Vigyan Bhavan. He described it to his friends. 'It is the place where big conferences are held. There are big halls with very comfortable armchairs. High above the seats, against the wall are the boxes where the interpreters sit.'

'The what?' asked Pamela.

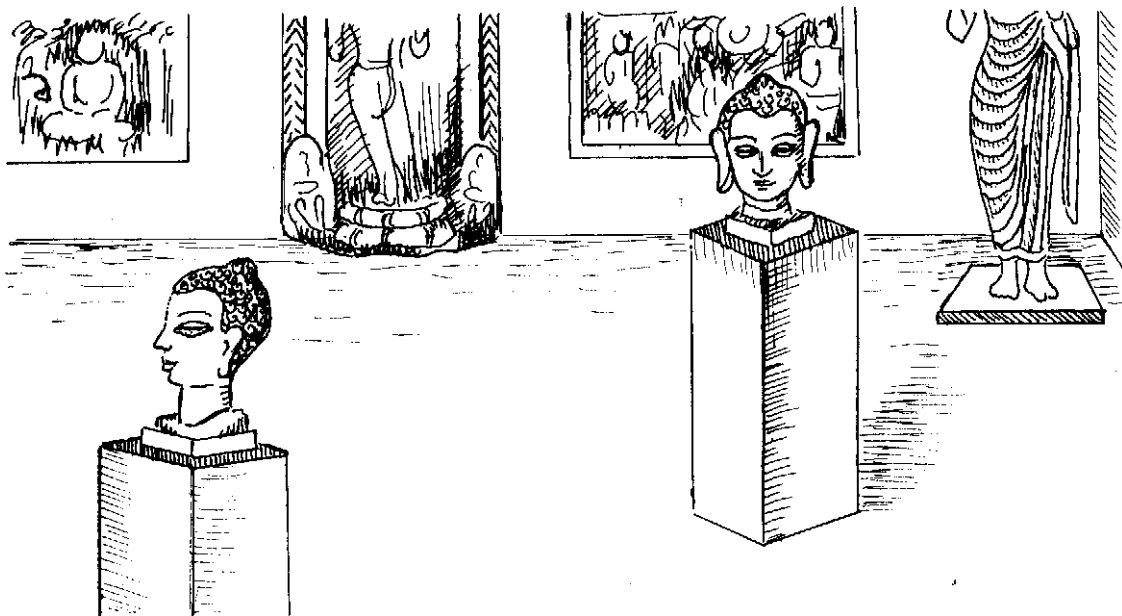
‘They are the people who translate what the speakers are saying. If one of the speakers knows only French, the interpreter will speak after him, translating what he is saying into English. They are very clever people, because they have to do it very quickly. And as they speak, they can be heard by those people in the audience who want to hear that particular language. If I switch on the button near my seat which said “Spanish”, I would hear the speech in Spanish through my earphones!’

‘I shall be an in-ter-pre-ter,’ said Chitra, pronouncing the new word carefully. ‘I already know Tamil, Hindi and English. I can learn other languages quickly.’

‘What will you be writing about, Chitra?’ asked Jaya.

The National Museum,’ Chitra said. ‘It is on Janpath, and it’s so big that I saw only some of the rooms. It has lovely sculptures, paintings and costumes from all over India. My favourites were the statues of Buddha—he has such a lovely smile. Imagine carving a statue which is still smiling hundreds of years later! I also loved the miniature paintings. They are small pictures, about the size of our exercise-books, and they have so many details painted in—the leaves on trees, the feathers on birds, even rain falling. Each picture is like a little jewel.’

‘We also saw a museum,’ said Salim excitedly. ‘But it was an outdoor museum—the Rail Museum in Motibagh. It is such fun. We spent hours there. We looked at all the old engines and carriages—they had some which the Rajas and Viceroy had used, with tiny sitting-rooms and dining-rooms. Then we had a ride on the little toy-train. After that we had lunch—a picnic actually, with cold drinks in the nice little raised restaurant—and saw the Museum. It is a round building, with old photographs and maps, and actual bits from old trains and platforms. I have asked my mother for a book about trains for my birthday.’

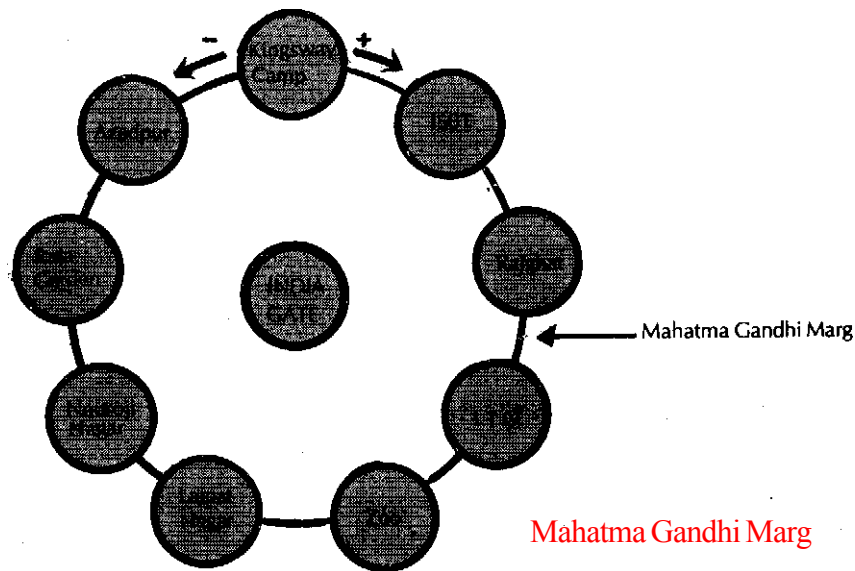


Jaya was as fond of trains as Salim. Her favourite day was when she had taken some visiting cousins on the circular train, from Lajpat Nagar. ‘We went at a time when there was not much of a crowd. It was so different from travelling in a bus—so quick and smooth!’

‘Well, my brother and I went on a bus,’ said Pamela. ‘We took a Mudrika from our house and got off at Rajghat. We walked to Vijay Ghat and Shanti Vana. It is so green and peaceful; it’s not like being in a town at all. Then we also went round, Jaya, like you.’

‘Clockwise or anti-clockwise?’ asked Ramu importantly. It took the others some time to understand.

‘Clockwise,’ said Pamela. ‘We passed Karol Bagh and went on the Ring Road through Azadpur, back home.’



Chetan and Sumit had a problem—they both wanted to write about the same thing! They had spent the day together at the Museum of Natural History. But they decided to divide it between themselves. Chetan had enjoyed the section describing the creation of the world, with coloured screens explained with the help of a recorded commentary. He had spent a long time looking at the beautiful landscapes, which showed a desert, a forest and a mountain scene. Sumit had been excited by the ‘Discovery Room’ where children were allowed to play, to read, and to touch things. There were ‘mystery boxes’ containing things you had to touch and try to identify. What Sumit had thought to be a piece of bark turned out to be a rabbit’s skin!



Archana had a very special evening to describe. Her family had gone to the Red Fort, and when it became dark, at about 6 o’clock, they went to see the ‘*Son-et-Lumiere*’ show. ‘It means “Sound and Light”, Chitra,’ said Archana. ‘If you become an interpreter and speak French, you will know how it is pronounced!’ It had been very exciting—by using lights and shadows on the Red Fort buildings, and with recorded sounds and voices, it was made to appear as though horses were actually riding up to the Fort, or a king was speaking to a minister, or the ladies of court were talking and laughing in the courtyards. It had made the Red Fort come alive for Archana.

‘Well, that’s seven different things to write about!’ said Ramu. It gives each of us six more things to see or do! Oh, I’m glad I’m living now, when I can see the Red Fort one Sunday and a space-rocket the next! If I had lived 100 years or more ago, I would not have been able to enjoy the space-rocket or the natural history museum! I’m sorry Miss Verma will not let us write about the zoo,’ he added sadly. ‘The Siberian cranes have come there for the winter, and I spent all last Saturday afternoon there.’

Meanings

conference: a meeting for discussion

interpreter: a person who translates from one language into another (usually during a speech or conference)

sculpture: something carved out of wood, stone or other materials

miniature: very small; miniatures are small paintings showing many details

commentary: a description of what is going on, e.g. at a cricket match

identify: find out who or what someone or something is

This chapter shows that:

Like all the big cities of the world, Delhi today has not only offices and shops, but also museums, art galleries and concert and conference halls. These are visited or used by people who live in Delhi or who visit it. Some of the big cities of the world are quite new (Washington, Canberra, Brasilia, Hong Kong), Others are old (London, Paris, Istanbul, Peking). These towns are particularly special, because they have much that is old but also much that is new.

Exercise

Write an essay (2 pages) about an excursion in or around Delhi which you have particularly enjoyed. Draw a picture to go with the essay.

For the teacher /parent

There are many places of interest in Delhi to take the child to. Apart from the parks and historic monuments, there are many museums. These are listed in most guide-books. Three which have not been described in this chapter are the Air Force Museum, the Teen Murti Museum and the Dolls' Museum.

A Word of Explanation about Chapters 13 and 14

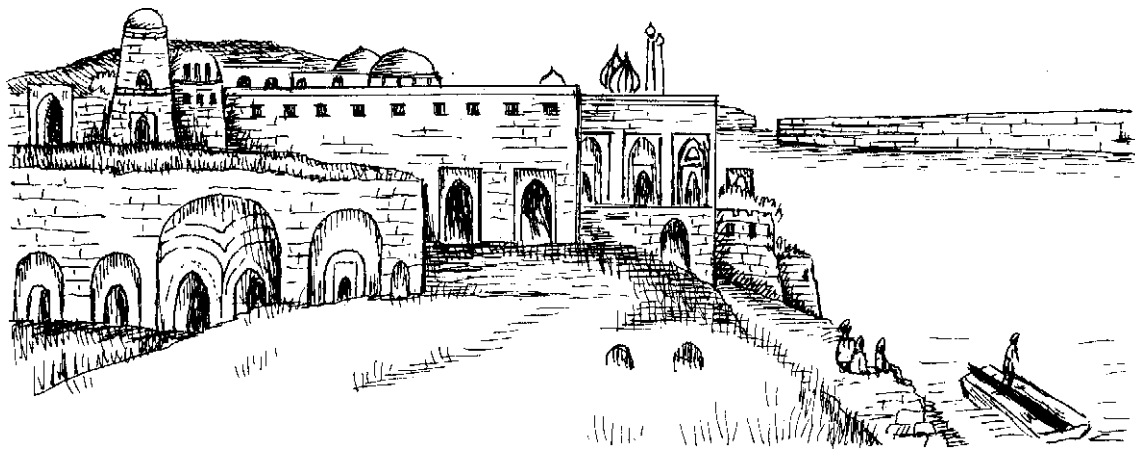


Our eight friends were curious about what it was like to live in Delhi many hundred years ago. So we shall take them on an imaginary journey—not to another place but to another time! Imagine them travelling in a time-machine which takes them to Delhi as it used to be earlier. It will make two stops—one 600 years ago (Chapter 13) and the other 150 years ago (Chapter 14). Before you read further, just read Chapter 2 again.

13. Delhi in 1385

The children parked the time-machine near a pretty canal, with shady trees along its banks. They were puzzled, because it did not look like Delhi at all. Then Archana noticed a newly-built mosque at a distance. It had many small domes. She remembered it as she knew it—with the same shape but with its *chunam* all gone. It was called Masjid Kalan—which she had thought meant Kala (black), but her father had told her that it meant ‘big’. When she looked to the right, she saw a fort with many grand buildings inside.

‘I know where we are!’ she cried. ‘That is Ferozeshah Kotla. There was a group of people watching something on the canal. The children moved nearer, and saw that a long flat boat was being pulled along by horses walking on both banks of the canal. On the boat was a long stone pillar.’



‘It is the Ashoka Pillar which stands in Ferozeshah Kotla,’ said Chetan. ‘How heavy it looks!’

They moved forward to listen to the people talking. They could understand most of their Hindustani, though there were some words they did not follow.

This Emperor Feroze is crazy about buildings and decorating his fort. He has had these heavy stone pillars brought from Meerut and Topra, so that they can adorn his city.

‘Where is the other one going to be placed?’

‘In the forest of Janan-numa, where the Emperor goes hunting. It is up north on the Pahari.’

‘Oh, I know. That’s the Ashoka Pillar on the Ridge, near the University,’ said Salim.



‘But the Emperor does not build only palaces, as some rulers do. He has built an excellent hospital, and a very good college. They say the teachers in the Hauz Khas *madrassa* are wiser than those at Isfahan or Baghdad!’

‘Would you believe it, our Emperor does not know how to read or write? He gets people to read books out to him.’

‘Just like our mothers read out stories to us when we were children/ smiled Chitra.

‘Delhi has become a prosperous city again. Do you remember how this Emperor’s uncle wanted to shift the capital to Daulatabad, down in central India? It seems like a dream now.’

‘Yes, now Delhi is a busy city again. When I go to the market-square, there are soldiers and merchants from so many parts of India and Central Asia, speaking so many different languages. I am amazed to think how far they have travelled to sell their goods. There were grapes and nuts from Afghanistan, and pepper from the South, from Malabar.’

‘My wife has set her heart on buying Chinese silk for our daughter’s *kurta*. But it is very expensive.’

‘They sound like our parents before they go shopping,’ laughed Pamela. ‘But the silk in the shops was brought on the backs of camels, not in aeroplanes,’ pointed out Sumit.

The country around Delhi has also become very prosperous. It is because the Emperor has opened the canals again, and their water is making our fields green. There are fields and houses all the way from here to Mehrauli.

‘I only hope there will be no more wars. We need peace.’

‘Ferozeshah Kotla looks such a grand fort/ commented Ramu. ‘Why has it become a heap of ruins?’

‘Because it was invaded by Taimur, the King of Samarkand. I read somewhere that he admired the buildings here so much that he made most of the builders and masons prisoners, and took them back to Samarkand with him,’ said Salim. ‘It’s still the same,’ replied Ramu. ‘My mother had an excellent carpenter working for her. He has just got a job in Saudi Arabia and has gone off. Leaving us with a dining table with three legs!’

‘You’d better prop up the third side!’ teased Pamela.

The time-machine’s engines were revving up. They moved towards it for another journey.

Meanings

Hindustani: the language of Delhi and areas near it, a mixture of Hindi, Persian and Arabic words

chunam: mixture of lime and crushed shells used as a coating for buildings, to make a shiny white surface

Pahari: hilly area—Delhi’s Ridge

madrassa: school/college

Exercises

1. Write true/false against each of the following:

- Mohammed Tughlak built Ferozeshah Kotla.
- Taimur was the king of Persia.
- The pillar in Ferozeshah Kotla is made of iron.
- Hindustani is a mixture of Hindi and Persian and Arabic.
- Mohammed Tughlak shifted the capital to Madurai.

2. Pair the following:

Grapes	Malabar
Pepper	Afghanistan
Silk	Banaras
Mangoes	China
Carpets	Persia

3. Write five sentences showing how Delhi today is different from Delhi in 1385.

14. Delhi in 1835

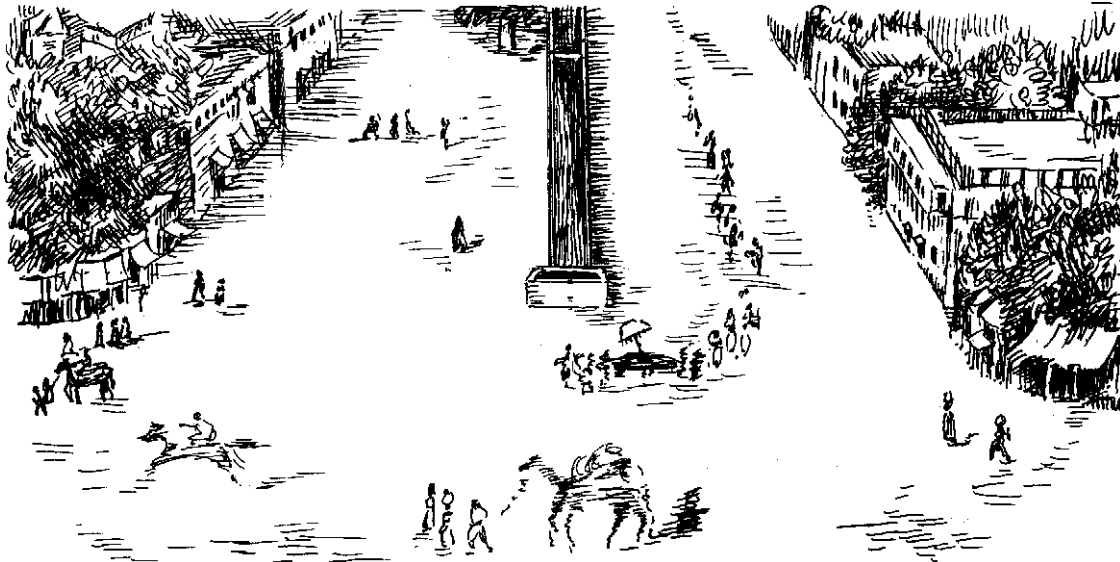
This time the children had no difficulty in recognizing where the time-machine had landed. They were in Chandni Chowk. 'It looks as though someone has washed everything clean,' remarked Ramu. The Red Fort was redder, the sky was bluer, the avenue was wider, red with *bajri*, not grey with asphalt. The shops were set back from the road, and down the centre flowed the same canal they had seen in their earlier stopover. The banks of the canal were shaded with trees and paved with brick, and there was a raised parapet, on which people were sitting. Elephants, horse-drawn carriages and *dolis* moved along the wider side of the avenue, while people strolled along the other side.

The children sat on the parapet and dabbled their hands in the water, and listened to the conversation of the people around them.

A group of young men were talking together excitedly. 'I think I shall study mathematics next year,' said one. 'Dr Jameson said I was good and that if I did well, I could go on to study astronomy.'

'I like listening to the English masters speaking English, but I don't think I will ever learn to spell it. Why isn't it a more simple language, like Persian? And it is so difficult to write from left to right!'

'All the same, it will be useful to learn it. Did you hear the latest? The *Sarkar* has said that they will not use Persian any more, and anyone who wants a government job will have to learn English.'

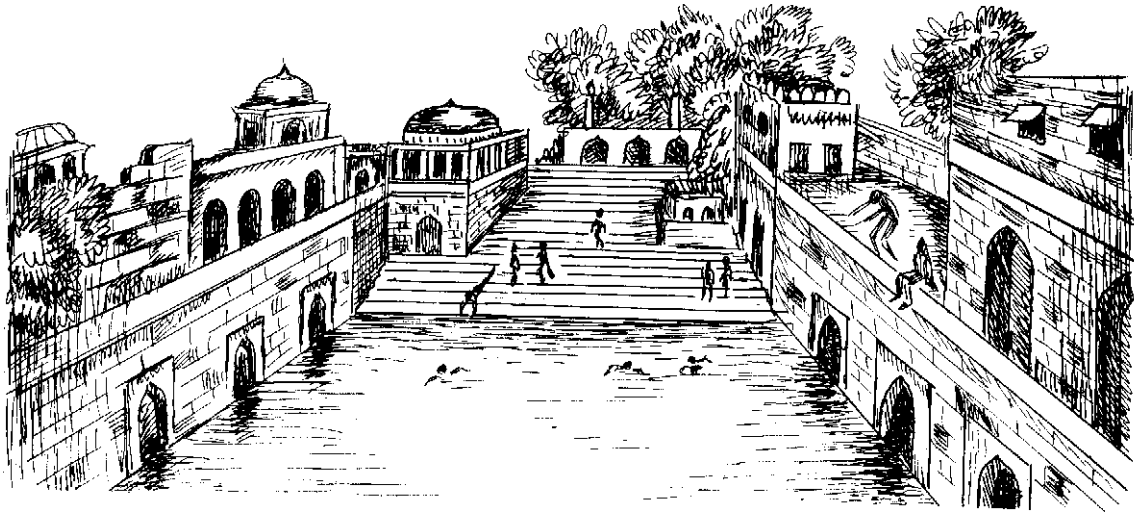


'How hard we have to study! My father says that when he was in College he did not study so much science. He thinks I am lucky to be able to learn all this. He was so surprised when I told him that the earth went round the sun!' (Archana laughed. 'And I was so surprised when my father told me about the earth going round, the sun!')

An elephant passed by. On its back was a *howdah* in which sat two Englishmen wearing suits. They looked very uncomfortable and the children wondered why they did not wear the cool white *kurta* and *churidar* that the people of Delhi wore. Some of the passers by raised their hands in *salaam* to the Englishmen. Two men crossed the road and sat down on the parapet.

Did you hear the story of the poet Ghalib?' one asked the other. 'He was walking in the Qudsia Gardens with the Emperor. He admired the ripe mangoes on the trees. "Your Majesty," he said to the Emperor, "I long to pluck these mangoes, but they all have your name written on them!" The next day the Emperor sent him six baskets of mangoes as a present, and Ghalib wrote a poem thanking him.

'Oh, the best mangoes in Delhi are those in my orchard in Mehrauli,' said his friend. 'Why don't you come with me next month, and we can spend some days there. You can bring your son. He will enjoy seeing the *baoli*, where the divers jump down hundreds of feet into the water. The British engineers have repaired it after it was damaged by the earthquake. There are many *baolis*, in Delhi, and even one behind Hailey Road.'



‘Everybody likes to stay in Mehrauli. That Metcalfe Sahib has made one of the old buildings there into a house for himself, and he goes and stays there with his family.’

‘He has built a huge house in Chandrawal. These Sahibs are like our Rajas and Nawabs. They like building palaces near the river, filled with beautiful pictures and furniture. Do you know Metcalfe Sahib smokes a hookah and wears Indian clothes?’

‘I know Metcalfe House,’ said Pamela. ‘It’s near the Old Secretariat. It must have been a beautiful place to live in.’

‘Chandni Chowk has not changed completely,’ said Salim, sniffing hungrily at the smell of frying *parathas* and looking longingly at the sizzling *jalebis*. ‘We still eat *parathas* and *jalebis* here, as they used to long ago.’ ‘They didn’t have cold drinks and ice cream,’ said Jaya. ‘Oh, yes. They had *lassi* and *sherbet* and *kulfis*,’ said Ramu. ‘Come on, let’s go. I’m getting hungry!’

Meanings

asphalt: a material like tar. It is used to make the surface of roads and playgrounds.

parapet: a low wall along a roof or the sides of a bridge, etc.

doli: covered seat, carried by men.

sarkar: government

howdah: a seat (usually covered) carried by an elephant

Exercises

1. Five of the following were ways in which people amused themselves in Delhi 150 years ago. Strike out the ones which are not correct.

kite-flying, pigeon-fighting, watching television, picnics, skating, swimming, listening to poetry, listening to the radio.

2. Write five sentences showing the changes that have taken place in Delhi between 1835 and 1985.

3. Write one sentence each about five different ways of travelling in a town, (by car, tram, bus, doli, tonga, horseback, bicycle, on foot)

Did you know?

Chat was a favourite snack in old Delhi, and the spices were added to the fruit and vegetables to hide the bitter taste of well-water. Many people had the surname ‘Dehlavi’ (meaning ‘of Delhi’) because they were proud to belong to Delhi.

15. Delhi in 1955

Chetan was sitting with his grandfather in the verandah. He had just finished his homework. 'We're learning about Delhi/ he told his grandfather. 'What was it like when you were a child?'

I did not know Delhi when I was a child,' his grandfather replied. Then Chetan remembered. His grandfather had come to Delhi in 1947. Even that seemed far off to him. Tell me about Delhi when you came here,' he said.

Mr Chopra sipped his tea and looked into the distance.

'Have you heard the story of Dick Whittington? The boy who thought that the streets of London were paved with gold? Well, a lot of us in 1947 thought that Delhi's streets were paved with gold! We came here from Lahore when the British Government, which was giving up India, decided to divide the country into two—India and Pakistan. When we came, we found that we could become rich in Delhi—but only by very hard work.

'I was a good mechanic, and I was lucky enough to find a good job as soon as I arrived. My cycle-repair shop was a great success. There have always been many bicycles in Delhi. In those days there were hundreds of bicycles, and very few cars. I worked hard, for I needed money to find a new place to live in. With the money I saved, I was able to build this house.



Very few people lived in Delhi then. You will say I am always talking about bicycles if I tell you that it was possible to cycle all over Delhi, and very comfortably. If we did it today, it would take a lot of energy to battle through all the traffic, as well as a lot of time. Many of us lived in Karolbagh, but the Ridge between Karolbagh and the city was thick with forest and wildlife.' (Chetan thought that must have been fun!)

'Your father and uncle used to cycle from Karolbagh to their college near Kashmiri Gate. There were very few buses, and they were very crowded. There was a tram in Sadar Bazaar but it moved so slowly that people found it quicker to walk!'

'What about schools?' asked Chetan.

There were some schools in buildings, but most of them were in tents! On very rainy days these schools had holidays, because a dripping tent is most uncomfortable. I remember your aunt always catching colds from going to school in the rain.



In the evenings we went for walks—near India Gate, or in Lodi Gardens. On Sundays we went for picnics to the Qutb. After the rains we would buy *jamun* from the jamun-pickers sitting under the trees. In winter we would buy hot spicy *chana* in paper-cones, while the *chanawala* sang his lovely song.’ (Chetan thought this sounded more fun than plastic packets of popcorn!)

Chetan’s grandfather still did a lot of walking, both in the early morning, while Chetan was still asleep, and in the evening. ‘I can’t understand why in a place like Delhi where the climate is so pleasant, people choose to sit in stuffy rooms watching films. Being out-of-doors is so much more healthy, and also such fun.’ Chetan decided that he would join his grandfather on his walks from the next day.

‘Do you miss Lahore, Dadaji?’ he asked.

‘When I first came here, I did. But now I feel Delhi is my home. Unless you feel you belong to a town, the town does not belong to you.’

Chetan thought that over. Then he said ‘I must tell that to Chitra. She keeps saying Mangalore is her “home”. I’ll tell her she has two homes—Delhi and Mangalore!’

Exercises

1. Five of the following were not built when Chetan’s grandfather came to Delhi. Can you spot them?

Asiad Village, the Secretariat, Ashok Hotel, the Zoo, Red Fort, Pragati Maidan, Safdarjang Airport, Udyog Bhavan

2. Ask your grandfather or grandmother to tell you some of the songs they sang as children and some of the games they played. Write these down in your scrapbook.

3. Write true/false against the following:

- When Mr. Chopra (Chetan’s grandfather) came to Delhi, many schools were in tents.
- Mr. Chopra came to Delhi from Burma.
- Mr. Chopra had a motor-cycle as a young man.
- Mr. Chopra lived in Karolbagh.
- Mr. Chopra went to school in Lahore.

16. Before We Say Goodbye

The class-tests were to begin the next week. The eight friends were busy studying.

‘Why is this subject called Social Studies?’ asked Archana.

‘Because it teaches us about society,’ said Sumit.

‘And about geography,’ said Jaya.

‘Geography is about maps, and history is about chaps,’ said Ramu.

‘Well, I know a lot about maps,’ said Salim confidently.

‘And we’ve learned a lot about chaps in history,’ added Pamela.

‘And it means civics,’ said Chitra.

‘What’s that?’ asked Chetan.

Sumit felt he should try to answer again. ‘Well, it means learning about being a citizen, someone who lives in a city. It tells us how to keep the city clean, and how to make the roads safe.’

‘You mean, we’ve learned not one subject but three?’ said Chetan in surprise. ‘History, Geography and Civics? But I never noticed all those subjects!’

They all laughed. ‘We should thank Miss Verma for that,’ said Archana. ‘We’ve studied Social Science this whole year without noticing we were studying it! We’ve learned a lot of things, though I feel quite ready for the tests!’

End